



# TEMAHAWKS *and* OLD LACE



TALES OF WESTERN  
NEW YORK

BY  
**ARCH MERRILL**



# *Tomahawks and Old Lace*

*Tales of Western New York*

By ARCH MERRILL



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## *The Light Dims in the Long House*

THE white man in his pride has called this commonwealth the Empire State.

Before ever the white man saw it, it was an empire — the empire of the Iroquois Confederacy. The warriors of the Six Nations believed it had been conferred upon them by the Great Spirit. Certainly it was theirs by right of conquest. After long and gory struggles they had driven out or subjugated their tribal foes.

For many moons they were masters of the state — from Niagara's thunder water to Long Island's farthest tip where the Atlantic pounded the sands of Montauk Point. It was their happy hunting ground — all the lordly mountains, all the rolling hills, the deep valleys where the tall grass waved; the slim, shimmering lakes and the rushing rivers that bore the war canoes, the gorges and the glens where falling waters tinkled, the wooded flatlands beside the great inland seas. It was an empire studded with towns of log huts, surrounded by fields of corn and beans and orchards of apple, plum and peach.

Its capitol was the great grey Long House built of elm bark that stood on the shores of Onondaga Lake. There day and night burned the Council Fire. There over the trails came the sachems of the Nations to make the laws and determine the destiny of the Iroquois Confederacy. Centuries before Woodrow Wilson, here was a League of Nations. And the Indian League worked.

In the beginning there were five Nations — the Senecas, the Cayugas, the Onondagas, the Oneidas and the Mohawks. The Tuscaroras, fugitives from the South, were late comers into the League.

Of all the Nations, none was more powerful, more populous, more warlike than the Senecas. To them was given the task of guarding the westerly frontier of the empire. Proudly they bore the title of Keepers of the Western Door of the Long House.

Their eastern boundary was a line drawn roughly from the head of Great Sodus Bay to Tioga, Pa. On the West, the North and the South it was bounded only by the Senecas' capacity for conquest.

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In the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia lives a black bear of peculiar ferocity. For three centuries it has been called "The Sinnaker." It is a backwoods corruption of the proud name of Seneca.

That name is an echo of an ancient fear — the terror that the marauding Keepers of the Western Door inspired in the hearts of the more peaceful and weaker tribes that surrounded the struggling young white colonies on the Seaboard.

From their bases in Western New York, the Senecas ranged far and wide. In bloody warfare they had cleared their future domain of the Neuter Nation and the Eries, "The Cat People," and all but obliterated them. Then they struck dread to the hearts of tribes in such far places as the banks of the Illinois and the swamps of South Carolina. Back to their "castles" and their torture stakes in the Genesee Valley and the Finger Lakes country they dragged their captives and their spoils of war, like the Romans of old. The Senecas were "The Romans of the West."

Then the "people with white faces" came, with their strange noisy guns that spat death; their gauds and baubles, their

trickery, their lust for land, their firewater to debauch the children of the forest.

The white man came to respect the power of the Seneca Nation. France and England sought to make it a pawn in their great game of colonial empire. The French foolishly sought to humble the Senecas by force of arms. In 1687 the army of the Marquis Denonville came down from Montreal and after routing the Indians in a battle on the site of Victor, devastated the Seneca towns and crops. The Senecas built new towns farther inland. The French expedition merely aroused the lasting enmity of the tribes, a situation upon which the crafty British capitalized.

So when the colonists rebelled against the Crown, the Senecas and most of the other Iroquois nations cast their lot with the British.

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In 1779, George Washington, commander of the rebel army, faced a "Red" menace.

It had naught to do with Russia. His problem concerned Redcoats and Redskins and the New York frontier.

It was a dark hour in the Revolution. Three years of fighting a powerful enemy with indifferent success had drained the resources and sapped the strength of the colonists. The cities of New York and Philadelphia were in British hands.

New York State was a hotbed of Toryism. Of its population of 180,000, at least 80,000 were loyal to the Crown. In the Mohawk Valley the powerful Johnsons and Butlers had joined their white Rangers with the savage legions on the frontier. They had furnished muskets, blankets and firewater to the Indians. In return the great granary of the Iroquois helped feed the Northern armies of the King.

Of all the Indian allies of Britain, the most crafty and numerous were the Senecas. No Iroquois nation held so vast a potential storehouse of provisions or so strategic a territory.

And there was a matter of revenge. In 1778 painted, whooping Senecas and equally ruthless Tories, led by the cold blooded Walter Butler, raided helpless settlements in the Wyoming Valley of Pennsylvania and butchered scores. No place on the frontier felt safe after that.

Washington saw that there could be no decisive victory until the hinterland had been cleared of the Redskins and their Tory cohorts and their power destroyed.

The American commander conceived a plan to strike the enemy in his stronghold, Central and Western New York. Succinctly he stated his objectives to Congress: "It is proposed to carry the war to the heart of the Six Nations and to cut off their settlements, destroy the next year's crops and do every other mischief which time and circumstances will permit."

An indifferent and faction-ridden Continental Congress quibbled about costs but finally authorized the invasion. Washington chose General John Sullivan, a veteran New Hampshire officer, as its commander. He was a bold, resourceful and outspoken man.

The Sullivan campaign of 1779 was no mere cruel, punitive expedition, no minor border foray. It was one of the most extensive and important campaigns of the war. It engaged a third of the Continental Army and it cost the impoverished colonies one million dollars. Nearly 5,000 men, most of them seasoned campaigners, marched through the wilderness into the Indians' homeland in a crucial offensive that can be compared to Sherman's march to the sea in another war 85 years later.

The strategy of the campaign was devised by Washington himself, an old Indian fighter. The expedition was to be split into three divisions. The main force under Sullivan, was to come up the Susquehanna; another unit under General James Clinton was to approach by the Mohawk Valley and a third under Colonel Brodhead was to march from Fort Pitt (Pittsburgh).

Sullivan and Clinton finally joined forces at Tioga but Brodhead never effected a union with the main body. He raided Indian settlements along the Allegheny River, however.

The invasion was planned for early summer and was intended as a surprise. Washington had hoped that the enemy would be deluded into the belief that the thrust was to be at Canada. But the slowness in providing supplies, the lukewarmness of some colonists, notably the Pennsylvania Quakers, and other drawbacks caused Sullivan's division to lay in camp at Easton, Pa., from May until August.

In the meantime the vigilant Indians had watched every move of the Yankee general and prepared to meet him.

The Tory-Indian allies chose to make a stand in a bend of the Chemung River near Newtown, not far from the present site of Elmira. Some 1,500 strong, they threw up breastworks and waited the advance of Sullivan.

The thunder of the American cannon, the mightiest they had ever faced, at first terrorized the savages who were trained to close combat tactics with tomahawk and musket, not to artillery warfare. Joseph Brant, the Mohawk chief, rallied the broken ranks and the Indians fought bravely and skillfully until, outflanked and outnumbered, they were forced to retreat.

The battle of Newtown was the turning point of the campaign. After that Sullivan's troops never came to grips with the fleeing Redskins and Redcoats.

Looking back at their lost paradise, the beaten Senecas saw in the sky that hazy early September of 1779 the smoke of their burning villages. One by one, French Catherine's Town (Montour Falls), Kendaia, Kanadesaga, (Geneva), the stronghold of their hereditary king; Kanandaigue (Canandaigua), and finally Genesee Castle or Little Beard's Town (Cuylerville), besides many smaller towns, were reduced to wind-blown ashes. Sullivan's men put to the torch the Indian villages of log huts, destroyed the standing crops of corn and beans, hacked down and girdled the fruit trees rich with their ripening burden. The granary that for so long had fed the army of the Crown was no more. George Washington's "Red" problem was solved.

The broken Indian-Tory army found refuge at Fort Niagara, a British bastion of the frontier. Only a handful of the Senecas ever went back to their old realm in the land of lakes and rolling hills.

With fire and sword the Yankee general had opened the Western Door and the light of the Long House had gone out forever.

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Sullivan's path to conquest was no easy road although he had to fight but one real battle. Stripped of all glamor, his expedition presents this picture:

A ragged, dirty, ill paid band of citizen soldiers, living on half rations, facing a lurking and treacherous foe in an uncharted wilderness, dragging their artillery, driving their horses and cattle over mountains and across rivers, through swamps and narrow defiles, in pitiless heat and driving rains, cutting their own road most of the way.

What little meat they had was tainted. Flour and salt were scarce. Mostly they lived on the corn, beans and other vegetables

they found in the Seneca fields. Every fourth man had to sit up all night grating corn for hominy. Their horses and cattle sickened and wandered away. In July Sullivan said a third of his men did not have shirts on their backs.

But some of the soldiers found time to keep diaries. By the light of camp fires along the lakes and among the hills of the wild Indian country in 1779, they wrote in their journals not only a record of the campaign but also their impressions of the land.

Here are a few entries picked from several journals:

Aug. 30 (day after battle of Newtown). Our brigade destroyed about 150 acres of the best corn ever I saw, some of the stalks grew 16 feet high, besides great quantities of beans, potatoes, pumpkins, cucumbers, squashes and watermelons. . . . and the enemy looking down on us from the hills but did not fire on us.

Skinned two of the Indians dead on the battlefield from hips down for boot legs, one for the major and one for myself.

Sept. 1.—French Catherine's (Montour Falls). We reached this place at 11 at night, a march of 14 miles through roads that cannot be described . . . eight miles of the way was a most horrid swamp . . . our pack horses tired out, sticking fast in the swamps, the packs in the mud. The men gave out, they having 14 days' provisions on their backs, exclusive of other baggage. . . . We layed down about 1 o'clock to sleep with the heaven to cover us. We never had so bad a day's march since we set off but what will not men go through with who are determined to be free.

French Catherine's Town, Sept. 2—One of the soldiers found at this place an old squaw hiding in a bunch of bushes. . . . She informed the General there had been a great debate

here between the warriors and their squaws. The squaws had a mind to stay here with their children. . . . the warriors were obliged to threaten to scalp the women if they did not go. . . . The place gets its name from an Indian "queen" with French blood.

Sept. 3—Came to the head of a pretty lake called Seneca. Marched on east side of it. Most of the land was excellent. One mile from our camp was a house Indians had just left, with their kettles on the fire boiling fine corn and beans, which we got . . . great many rattlesnakes killed today.

Sept. 4—We burnt six houses and destroyed some corn joining the Seneca Lake . . . some of the pack horses gave out and died under their loads partly for want of forage . . . the Enemy had wrote on several trees that Gen. Sullivan might pursue but would soon meet with trouble.

Sept. 5—At Kendaia we found a large old orchard and three grand tombs where it is supposed the Indians buried some of their chiefs, they were all painted very fine and made of hewed timber and one of them had a chimney on it.

Sept. 6—The horses and cattle were so scattered that the army could not march until 3 p. m. . . . encamped amidst a great plenty of pea vines.

Sept. 7—Two miles from the lake we proceed to a large town called Kanadesaga (near Geneva) which is considered a capital of the Senecas and is called Seneca Castle. It consists of about 40 houses, the ruins of a stockade fort and a block house. . . . No person was found in this town save a white child three years old, emaciated almost to a skeleton. . . . It is supposed to be a prisoner left by the savages because it could speak and understand only Indian. A milch cow was found near it which was probably left for his support.

We eat meat twice in three days and bread once in five days. Hungry bellies and hard duty now.

Sept. 8—A party destroyed a town named Kashong on the west side of the lake . . . another party of volunteers made a forced march along the Seneca Lake and destroyed a town called Skoi-yase (present site of Waterloo). The rest of the troops were employed destroying corn in and about Kanadesaga.

Sept. 9—Because of the heavy rain we were not able to march until 12 noon; what corn, beans, peas, squashes, potatoes, onions, turnips, cabbage, cowcombers, watermelons, carrots, parsnips our men, horses and cattle could not eat were destroyed. Passed through a thick swamp and encamped in an old field.

Sept. 10—Came to a very pleasant lake called Kanandaigue. We forded the outlet of the lake, marched about half a mile and came to an Indian town, Kanandaigue, consisting of 30 houses which were much better built and situated than any I had seen before. We halted there an hour and burnt the houses.

(The trooper did not know that this was "The Chosen Spot" of the Seneca Nation, that above the pleasant lake towered the gaunt mountain that was the legendary birthplace of the Senecas, known as "The People of the Hill.")

Sept. 11—Passed through fields of grass, very high, and over hills, ravines and morasses; arrived at Hanayaee (Honeoye), near a lake. The town took its name from a misfortune which befel an Indian here—the loss of a finger which the name signifies. Here was left Capt. Cummings with a garrison of 50 men, including invalids, feeble horses with all supplies and baggage that could be spared.

Sept. 12—We crossed a small lake (Hemlock) at its mouth, about knee deep, between two ranges of hills. We encamped in the woods within half a mile of Conesus. Lieutenant Boyd

of the rifle corps, some volunteers and as many riflemen, six and twenty in the whole, were sent up to reconnoiter the Genesee Castle (now Cuylerville), having for a guide an Oneida Indian named Hanyost.

Sept. 13—We marched into the town of Conesus (near the head of the lake). . . . We were alarmed by some Indians firing and giving chase to a party of surveyors. They wounded a corporal who died next day and chased them until one of our camp sentinels fired upon the Indians and stopped their advance.

Two men of Lieutenant Boyd's party discovered a few Indians ahead. . . . Boyd with his party gave chase and followed them within two miles and a half from the main army, where a body of savages lay concealed, surrounded him and his party. He nobly fought them but by their great superiority, he was obliged to retreat, loading and firing as his party ran. The Indians killed and in the most inhuman manner tomahawked and scalped six that were found. Nine of the party have got safe in but Boyd and Hanyost, the guide, with seven others are yet missing.

(There is a plain shaft on a hillock a mile west of Conesus Lake today to mark the spot of that ambuscade in which Butler's Tories as well as Indians participated.)

Sept. 14—We proceeded for Genesee Castle, the last and capital settlement of the Seneca Country. We moved over a plain of the richest soil that can be conceived, filled with grass higher than a man on horseback and came to the Genesee River, which we crossed, and then ascended a rising ground which afforded a prospect very beautiful.

At the capital town, which was deserted and was the largest we have met with on our whole route, we found the body of Lieutenant Boyd and a rifleman, Michael Parker, massacred in the most cruel and barbarous manner . . . and left prey to the

dogs. This evening the remains were interred with military honors. May his fate await those who have been the cause of his . . .

Sept. 15—This morning the whole army were engaged in destroying the corn, beans, potatoes and other vegetables, in quantity immense . . . the whole of which was pulled up and piled in large heaps, mixed with dry wood, taken from the houses and consumed to ashes. When the business was finished, these were the orders of the day:

"The commander-in-chief informs this brave and resolute army that the immediate objects of this expedition are accomplished: total ruin of the Indian settlements and the destruction of the crops which were designed for the support of inhuman barbarians while they were desolating American frontiers. . . . The army this day will commence its march for Tioga."

There in the soldiers' own words, is a digest of the Expedition of 1779.

Sullivan's army retraced its steps, its mission accomplished, over the route by which it came, a route today dotted with historical markers.

And rightly so. For the campaign was of tremendous import in national and local history. Its effects were manifold.

A savage foe and his ally had been cleared from a vast frontier and forced into hiding at Fort Niagara. The power of the Six Nations had been crushed forever; their empire was blackened embers. The confidence of the Indians in their British allies had been shaken. The menace of border massacre had been lifted. A great territory had been won at little loss of life and colonial morale had been boosted mightily.

But above all Sullivan's men had blazed a trail of empire.

His soldiers from six states as they traversed this wild new land marveled at its richness. They saw vast stands of

virgin timber, fields of grass tall enough to hide a horse and rider, fertile Indian fields of corn, bean and pumpkins, rich orchards, vines growing wild on the hills, rushing streams that would turn mill wheels, sparkling lakes teeming with fish, forests abounding in game.

They went home with sweet corn in their knapsacks and wondrous tales of this Promised Land. In a decade many of them again were following the old trail along the lakes, not to the boom of cannon but to the rumble of settlers' wagons. Their axes rang out in the woods and they cleared the land and reared their cabins in the old Indian land they had despoiled.

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For the vanquished Senecas, there was only heartbreak and misery. Defending their homeland against invasion, they had lost the forest realm over which they ruled for two centuries. Empire building ever is ruthless business.

When the haze of September settles over this land that once was the Senecas, two phantom armies march again over the old trails as they did in a September of 169 years ago. One is a broken rabble in full flight. The others is a tired, ragged but conquering army in buff and blue, dragging along its clumsy cannon, picking its way carefully — Yankee Doodle marching westward, blazing a path for settlement.

From the depths of the lake to which the Senecas gave their own proud name often comes an uncanny rumble like the boom of distant guns. In September the lake "guns" sound their deepest, most funereal note. Can it be a requiem for the ancient glory of the Keepers of the Western Door?

## *The White Woman*

THE restless palefaces are forever shifting the scenes in this old Indian land.

Now they are gouging into the steep gray walls of the High Banks of the Genesee. The thud of the white man's pile drivers, the roar of his bulldozers, the clank of his steam shovels, the boom of his dynamite blasts shatter the wonted quiet of the old Indian valley.

The Great White Father is building a 20 million dollar flood control dam there, about two miles southwest of the village of Mount Morris.

For decades such a dam has been the dream of dwellers in the Valley who, spring after spring, have seen the muddy waters roll over their lands, delaying their planting, washing out their bridges, closing their highways and, sometimes driving them from their homes. It is hoped the new dam will end all that.

It will be a modern and impressive structure. But nothing man-made can embellish Nature's handiwork there. Grandeur is the word for the High Banks. The view from the cliffs is awe-inspiring. It baffles phrase making. You have to see for yourself.

Yet through the years relatively few people have sought out the "Palisades of Western New York." They are off the beaten path and have been little publicized.

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Ghosts walk along the High Banks.

In fancy a slight, bowed figure steals along the old Portage-Squawkie Hill trail with soft moccasin tread, peers into the great

gorge and wonders what the white men are up to now in her old domain.

Over the High Banks will ever hover the spirit of Mary Jemison, the first white woman to dwell in "The Pleasant Valley" of the Senecas, long before the first smoke curled up from pioneers' cabins.

The strange tale of "The White Woman of the Genesee" is an inseparable part of the lore of that countryside.

The story begins on a sailing vessel, in 1742 when a daughter was born to Thomas and Jane Jemison who had left their native Erin to settle in the New World.

After 16 years, the Jemisons and their five children are prosperous and happy in their new home in a deep valley in what is now Adams County, Pennsylvania.

It is April and the breath of spring is upon the land. Mary, the third child, the daughter born on the sailing vessel, has been sent to a neighbor's home for a horse. On the way she has a vision — a white sheet seems to descend and catch her up, saving her from a doom that threatened others.

Returning home, she finds her father shaving an ax helve in the yard, her mother busy in the house, her two older brothers playing in the barn. There are guests, a soldier, his wife and their two children. The soldier takes care of the horse Mary has brought. A shot is heard, then the dreaded Indian war whoop. Six Indians and four Frenchmen run out of the woods, break into the house and take captive everyone save the two boys, unseen in the barn.

Prodded by whips, the prisoners are driven out into the woods. Along the way they see the body of the soldier guest. That explains the shot. The hapless settlers are marched over the rough trails.

The Indians are ruthless with all save one, tiny, well modeled Mary with the curly golden hair and the deep blue Irish eyes. She seems a goddess to them. They treat her kindly, replace her shoes with moccasins.

On the second day of her captivity she sees some bloody scalps. She never sees her family again. The 16-year-old girl, who was bred on the frontier, knows their fate.

They reach Fort Pitt. At an Indian settlement, Mary is given to two Seneca sisters who have lost a brother in battle. The weird adoption ceremony with its dervish-like dancing and screeching frightens the white girl. The Indian women name her Deh-gi-wa-nus, which means "The Two Falling Voices." They replace her tattered garments with Indian garb.

The savages paddle on down the Ohio to another Indian village. Mary is forbidden to speak English aloud but she murmurs to herself the prayers her mother had taught her. She learns the Indian language although she never becomes fluent in that tongue.

The tribe decrees that she marry a young Delaware. His name is Shenigee and he is tall and brave and kind. She learns to take care of the wigwam, to hoe corn and perform the other tasks of a squaw.

A baby boy, fair skinned, is born and she names him Thomas after her father. Slowly the memories of her life in the green Pennsylvania valley grow dim. She counts time by moons rather than months; tells the seasons by the changing leaves and by the ways of the animals. She takes up the Red Man's way of life and time heals the horror of her memories.

At the time of the harvest moon her husband goes away with a hunting party. Mary, with her baby and with two Indians, as escorts, are sent to a foster mother at Little Beard's

Town, now Cuylerville, on the Genesee. There her husband will rejoin her in the spring.

So the young mother sets out, on foot on a 300-mile journey, her papoose strapped on her back. Footsore, cold and often hungry, she plods on until she reaches the Seneca stronghold on the Genesee, where she is warmly welcomed.

She is to spend nearly all the rest of her long life in that lovely valley.

She is safe and happy that winter in her new home. Then a messenger brings sad news. Her husband is dead.

A Dutch trader, enamored of her blond beauty, tries to kidnap her. A chief of the tribe, in the trader's pay, aids the plot. Others of the village warn Mary and she hides with her baby in the reeds until the danger is past.

It is decreed that she marry again. Her new mate is Hiakattoo, 6 feet tall and a warrior-chief. He is over 60 and she is 24. For more than 40 years, until he dies, she never wavers in her loyalty to the big Seneca. To them are born six children.

The Revolution comes and the Senecas cast their fortunes with the British arms. The Tory leaders, the Butlers, and the half breed chief, Brant, stop at Mary's cabin and she pounds corn from dawn to dusk for her noted guests.

In September of 1779 guns boom in the distance and terror grips Little Beard's Town. Sullivan's American army is laying waste the Long House and the Redcoats and their red allies are in flight.

The Yankee army nears the Genesee and Mary, with the rest of the women, flees to Fort Niagara. She puts two young children on the back of an old horse, straps the baby on her back, bids two older children follow on foot.

In the late fall she returns and finds a ravaged valley. The Yankees have burned the crops and the villages. Mary finds shelter with an old Negro and a young boy on the Gardeau flats, south of Mt. Morris, and husks corn for her lodging. In the spring she has her own cabin. Gardeau along the High Banks is to be her home for 50 years.

\* \* \*

White settlers come to the Genesee. They learn the strange story of Mary's long captivity. She is given the opportunity to rejoin her own people and rejects it. She knows and trusts the Indians.

The Senecas are generous. Over the protests of the orator, Red Jacket, she is given a grant of four square miles of land along the river. At the treaty of Big Tree in 1797 when the Indians relinquished their land claims to Robert Morris, she drives a shrewd bargain. She tells Thomas Morris, representing his father at the treaty fire, that she had tilled patches here and there on the flats and wants an extension of her tract. Morris, thinking it means only a few acres, accedes to her demand.

A survey later shows The White Woman's farm contains 30,000 acres of fine Valley land.

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So she gathers her children about her and settles down to till the many acres given her. She becomes a tradition, "The White Woman of the Genesee."

She sees many river floods, the great landslide of 1817 near her cabin.

Shy at first, she makes friends with the white settlers. When they are ill she brews tea for them made from herbs she gathered herself. She tells them where the choicest wild berries grow.

Mary is an old woman now, no longer the Irish lass who came to the Genesee so long ago. She walks quickly, her head bent forward because she had carried heavy weights from a strap bound around her forehead. Her hair still is curly but snow white and no longer golden. The tired eyes are still deep and Irish blue. She speaks English with strange Irish and Indian idioms.

She wears a brown flannel half gown tied with thongs, instead of buttons, a skirt of blue cloth, blue cloth leggings, buckskin moccasins and in winter, a white wool blanket. She sleeps on skins on the floor of her cabin. She shuns chairs and prefers to sit on the floor or on a bench.

Mary Jemison does not take to the ways of her own folk. She has lived the Indian way too long.

Her old age is full of woe. She sells off the bulk of her many acres. Her second son, John, who has the features and the worst traits of his father's race, kills his older brother, Thomas, the apple of Mary's eye, in a drunken frenzy. Later he kills another brother, Jesse, in similar fashion before he himself meets an inevitable violent death. The bereaved mother raises her voice against the sale of firewater to Indians.

A white impostor who claims to be a kinsman cheats Mary out of 400 acres of land. She feels her distrust of her own people is well founded.

In 1831 she leaves her valley to live with a daughter on the Buffalo Creek Reservation. At the age of 89 she attends an Indian mission school and renounces paganism for Christianity. She has never forgotten the prayers her white mother taught her when she was a girl.

On Sept. 19, 1833, there is wailing in the reservation houses along the Buffalo Creek. Mary Jemison is dead.

Until 1874 her bones rested in the reservation burying ground. Then they are reinterred at Letchworth Park near the High Banks and the Valley where she lived so long.

Today a statue of The White Woman stands at her grave by the singing waters of the three falls. Near by is the cabin she built in 1800 on the flats of Gardeau.

At Squawkie Hill where the High Banks end, a blue historical marker proclaims the site of "The White Woman's Spring." Up the hill is part of the old log house where lived Thomas, Mary's grandson.

And there are the ghostly footfalls along the gorge and the story that is part of the lore of the land — of the white girl, who, taken into captivity by the Indians, spent the rest of her life among them and became "The White Woman of the Genesee."

## *The Voices and the Visions*

IN THE pioneering time of this land of many "isms," there were those who saw mystic visions and heard voices not of this earth.

Out of the visions and the voices sprang religious sects that took strong root among a lonely and emotionally starved people, settlers in a countryside where sometimes strange shadows fall.

In Western New York there are many stations on what Carl Carmer has aptly called "a broad psychic highway, a thoroughfare of the occult," stretching across the Empire State.

Some of the sects that blossomed along that road are extinct and all but forgotten now. It has been many a year since the Jemimakins, followers of Jemima Wilkinson, "The Woman Who Died Twice," had their strange colony above the waters of Keuka Lake; since the Millerites donned their white robes and prepared to ascend into heaven on the hour their leader had set for the end of the world; since a phalanx of Fourierists dreamed of a "Never Never Land" on the shores of Sodus Bay; since the produce-laden wagons of the Shakers, the "Plain People," rumbled over the roads of Wayne County and the Genesee Valley.

Two religions that were spawned in this mystical land burgeoned into powerful churches of world scope and are mighty today. Both were born in the shadow of the drumlins, those knobby hillocks that dot the landscape southeast of Rochester and are relics of the time when the great ice sheet covered the land.

One of those living "isms," is Mormonism, which sprang

from an unlettered farm lad's vision of golden plates hidden in a drumlin's side.

The other is modern Spiritualism which began with the mysterious rappings two young girls heard in their humble home near Newark a century ago.

Today both of those sects, which arose from such obscure, even fantastic beginnings, number their followers by the hundreds of thousands all over the earth.

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On a hill near Penn Yan overlooking Keuka, the two-pronged lake, stands a three-story frame house of sturdy hand-hewn timbers. With their own hands the devoted followers of Jemima Wilkinson, "The Universal Friend," built it there in 1809. It still is known as "The Friend's House," although it passed out of the hands of the Jemimakins nearly a century and a half ago.

In 1776 when she was 18, Jemima Wilkinson, of humble Rhode Island parentage, was stricken with a fever that sent her into delirium and down into the Valley of the Shadow. She arose from her bed to announce she had "left time," as she phrased it; her carnal existence had ended; her body had been divinely reanimated and she had returned to earth, neither man or woman but "The Publick Universal Friend."

She was a shapely lass with long raven ringlets then and although unread, possessed the gift of tongues and a magnetic personality. She preached a simple doctrine: "Repent lest ye burn in hell." She taught self denial and abjured her people to celibacy.

She drew followers, some of them wealthy and influential, from all parts of New England. They resolved to have a colony of their own in some sequestered spot far from prying eyes and

in 1788 a site at Dresden near Seneca Lake was chosen. The region was a wilderness, inhabited only by Indians and a few white hunters and trappers. The Friend's settlement was the first one of size in the whole Genesee Country.

Two years later Jemima Wilkinson rode the long way from Philadelphia to her "New Jerusalem" in a coach with a crescent-shaped body that bore on its side the letters "U F". That coach today is a prized exhibit at the Museum in Canandaigua.

Her settlement thrived and in 1809 the Jemimakins moved to a new home near Keuka Lake. There the Friend ruled, a benevolent despot. Some of the white settlers who had trickled into the new country scoffed at Jemima and her doctrines. Some of her own flock flaunted her law of celibacy, married and had children. James Parker, who had been her right arm, turned on his leader and had her haled to court to Canandaigua to face a charge of blasphemy. The judge, impressed by her eloquence in his court room, acquitted her.

There's a story that she once declared she could walk on the water as Christ did. When a multitude gathered on the shore of Keuka Lake to see the miracle, she asked them: "Have ye faith in me?" When her own people shouted "Yes," the Friend retorted: "If ye have faith then, no evidence of my powers is needed."

The prophetess sickened and her beauty faded. She "left time," in 1819. This time she did not arise from the dead as she had when she was a girl in Rhode Island. Without her forceful leadership, her colony disintegrated and died.

Now only the house on the hill, the faded old coach, the Friend's secret grave and the descendants of the Jemimakins who dwell in the land of lakes and vineyards, remain to tell of a strange "Ism" of the long ago.

\* \* \*

Among the markers to the voices and the visions along York State's "thoroughfare of the occult" is a tall shaft, surmounted by the figure of an angel, that dominates a hilltop along the Palmyra-Manchester road.

To thousands of members of the Church of Latter Day Saints, popularly known as Mormons, that monument is a world shrine, denoting the birthplace of their faith.

It was from that magic hill Cumorah in 1827 that, according to the Mormon belief, were dug the golden plates that had been revealed to young Joseph Smith by the angel Moroni in a vision, and on them was written the true Gospel that became the book of Mormon.

Joseph Smith was a lanky, tow-headed farm lad of 18 when first he saw the vision. He came to Palmyra in 1816 with his parents, five brothers and three sisters from Royalton, Vt. For two and one half years the Smiths lived in Palmyra where the father peddled gingerbread and root beer from a cart. The Smiths were not particularly respected in Palmyra. Early historians of the region have called the third son, Joseph, "shifty and shiftless." In 1818 the family moved to a farm south of Palmyra. It was there that Joseph was visited by the angel. That farm is now one of the holy places of the Mormon Church.

The rest is familiar history, the printing of the Mormon Bible in Palmyra, the gathering of converts, not so many of them from the immediate vicinity, the westward hegira of the faithful under the command of Joseph Smith; the short stay in Kirtland, Ohio and the founding of a colony and the building of a temple in Nauvoo, Ill. Persecution dogged the westward march of the Mormon host and it was in Nauvoo that Joseph Smith was killed by a mob that riddled his powerful frame with bullets.

Smith fell at the height of his power. This onetime obscure farm lad had gone far. Only a few days before his assassination, astride a white charger and resplendent in the uniform of a lieutenant general, he had led 5,000 of his Legion in a grand parade. This unlettered youth with the giant's body who dreamed of angels was called a charlatan by his enemies, but certainly he possessed magnetism and qualities of leadership.

From Smith's dead hands, the former Mendon carpenter and chair maker, Brigham Young, seized the torch of power. It was this other Western New Yorker, a truly great administrator, who led his people on a heartbreakng trek across the prairies and the mountains to the Great Salt Lake where the Mormons created a veritable empire.

Western New York is enshrined in Mormon hearts as the birthplace of their faith and every Summer thousands gather at the sacred hill, at the foot of the towering shaft capped with the figure of the angel Moroni. License plates of many states gleam in the sunshine but those of Utah predominate when the faithful gather at the place of the church's nativity along the Palmyra-Manchester road.

\* \* \*

It was also in the drumlin-shadowed land on the night of March 31, 1848 that strange knockings were heard on the walls of a blacksmith's humble home at Hydesville on the northern outskirts of Newark.

The ghostly noises had been heard before and the little house was said to be haunted. There were ugly rumors around the countryside that a few years before the Foxes moved in, an itinerant peddler had been robbed and murdered there and his body buried in the cellar.

It was on that March night a century ago when the wind howled like a disembodied spirit across the flats of Wayne that for the first time 7-year-old Katy Fox and her 10-year-old sister, Margaret, daughters of John Fox, the village blacksmith, bade the "voice" reply. They snapped their fingers a certain number of times and the rappings answered like an echo from the spirit world. After that they talked often with the phantom and from a code evolved by a neighbor it was determined that the spirit was that of Charles B. Rosna, the slain peddler.

The strange news spread and soon the rutty roads that led to the Fox home were cluttered with wagons, carriages and curious folk on foot and on horseback. The Fox sisters reported hearing sounds like that of a heavy body being dragged down into the cellar and feeling a clammy hand on their brows in the dead of night.

Finally the Fox family fled to their former home in Rochester. There it was discovered that an older sister, Mrs. Leah Fox, also possessed psychic powers and she aided the younger girls in seances. Then came the demonstrations before hostile crowds in Rochester's old Corinthian Hall that startled the nation and were known as "The Rochester Rappings."

That was the real birth of modern Spiritualism. Notables, among them Horace Greeley, the New York publisher-politico, became a believer and defended the "rappings."

The sect gathered thousands of followers because the belief was kindled in many a heart that at last mortal man had pierced the shroud that veils the grave and it was possible to communicate with loved ones gone before. Later in life Katy and Margaret Fox declared at public meetings that the rappings were a hoax and were caused by their ability to snap their toe joints. Then it did not matter. The Spiritualist Church was on solid ground and ignored the sisters' "expose."

The weatherbeaten cottage where first the knockings were heard was moved 22 years ago to Lily Dale, the shrine of the church. Later a plain stone marker was set along the roadside at the site of the Fox house but the historic spot was long untended. The weeds grew rank and high and fallen trees lay where they fell.

But last Spring on the centennial observance of modern Spiritualism, the Fox Memorial Society, which had acquired the site, dedicated it as a shrine of their church. The group plans to landscape the grounds and erect memorial buildings on the spot where two little girls first heard strange rappings — and a mighty church was born.

\* \* \*

The Society of Christian Believers first came to Sodus Bay in 1823. Unbelievers called them the Shakers or Shaking Quakers because of the twitchings of their bodies under the spell of religious ecstasy. They were followers of Mother Ann Lee of Mount Lebanon in Eastern New York, who, like Jemima Wilkinson, claimed to be Christ in a reincarnation.

On their many rolling acres above the bay they built a cluster of buildings. They were thrifty people, dressed plainly and pooled their labor and their profits. In 1836 they sold their land to a syndicate projecting a ship canal to link Sodus Bay with the Erie Canal, a dream that never came true.

The Shakers moved to a 1,700-acre estate they bought near Groveland in the Genesee Valley. There they erected many buildings. In 1896, after their sect had dwindled, they sold the site to the state for the Craig Colony for the treatment of epileptics.

But country people still call Alvah G. Strong's Alasa Farms estate on Sodus Bay "The Shaker Tract" and the manor house of the plain people still stands, the Strong's summer residence.

And there's a Shakers Crossing in the Geneseo-Mount Morris area although the soberly clad men and women in bonnets who once drove their produce-laden wagons along the valley roads are only memory.

\* \* \*

Followers of another "Ism" came to dwell on the Shaker Tract at Sodus Bay in 1844. They were adherents to the doctrines of the French social reformer, Charles Fourier, which in the 1840s had a considerable vogue in America. It was Communism, but not of the Russian Twentieth Century variety.

Fourierism was based on the optimistic theory that the free play of human and natural forces would result in the greatest happiness for the greatest number. To achieve this Utopia, society was to be divided into groups called phalanxes of 1,600 members each. Each phalanx was to live under one roof, eat the same food and was to be grouped into branches of work according to each member's natural bent. There would be no discord. No police would be needed. Wages would be abolished and the surplus of their joint labors would be distributed among the members.

Leading American exponent of the Fourierist gospel was Batavia-born Albert Brisbane who had been converted to the cause while on a European visit. Horace Greeley became a disciple and the Fourierists took over Brook Farm, the famous co-operative experiment at West Roxbury, Mass., that was supported by such notables as Ralph Waldo Emerson, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Thoreau and Margaret Fuller.

Brisbane spoke at meetings in Rochester and aroused so much enthusiasm that in October of 1843 the Sodus Bay Phalanx was organized and the old Shaker Tract was purchased for the colony. Other units sprang up in Bloomfield, Clarkson, Rush

and Manchester. The Sodus Bay group was the largest and lasted the longest.

The Phalanx drew heavily from the Hicksite Quakers of Rochester and Farmington, long a Quaker center. The Hicksites were an offshoot of the Society of Friends who disagreed with the parent organization on matters of dogma.

The new group took over the Shaker Tract, erected some new buildings and worked hard to make their co-operative scheme succeed. It lasted two years and died in April, 1846 from financial malnutrition, a disease which killed off the whole movement. Brook Farm succumbed in 1847.

This "Ism" had a short life but an interesting one and it drew its adherents from a higher intellectual plane than most of those that blossomed in this rugged land.

\* \* \*

It was in 1832 that a Vermont farmer named William Miller became "The Prophet of Doom." Out of his long reading of the Bible, he announced the impending end of the world. He set the date as April 23, 1843. His warnings caught the imagination of many people and Boston and Rochester became hotbeds of the movement.

As the doomsday neared, many Millerites sold their earthly possessions and made their ascension robes. Then Miller found his calculations had been in error and set a new date for the end of time, October 22, 1843.

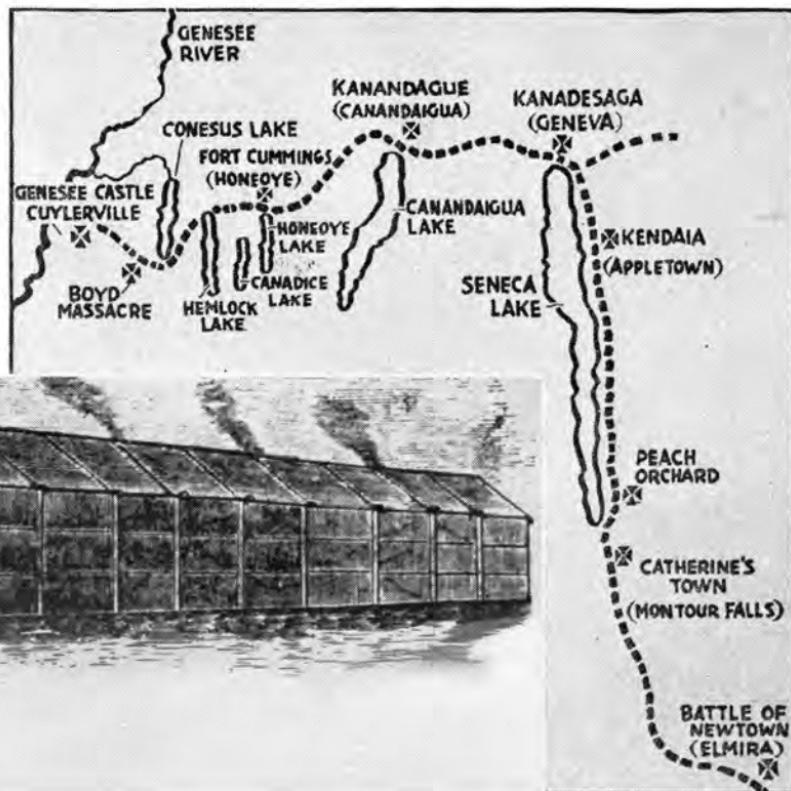
On that night his followers donned their white robes, climbed trees and roofs, awaiting their ascension into heaven while the rest of the world perished. In Rochester many flocked to Cobb's Hill, gazing into the sky. When dawn came and the world still stood, they crawled, disillusioned, back to their homes — at least those who had not sold all their property.

\* \* \*



*Seneca Hunter Group at Canandaigua Lake—from Exhibit in State Museum, Albany.*

Map at right shows route taken by Sullivan Expedition of 1779 which crushed the power of the Seneca Indians and paved way for settlement. Below is artist's conception of the Long House of the Iroquois on Onondaga Lake, where the sachems of the Nations met around eternal fire.



In more recent years, Rochester became the center of an unusual religious society, known first as "The Christian Brethren" and then the Megiddo Mission.

This cult, which believes in literal interpretation of the Bible and plain living, came here in 1904 under the leadership of their founder, L. T. Nichols. After 20 wandering years on a Mississippi river boat which they had built with their own hands, they decided on Rochester as a permanent location and after first meeting in a big tent at Sea Breeze, they bought a large tract of undeveloped land in the Thurston Road-Sawyer Street sector, which has been their mission headquarters ever since. For years they spread their gospel by canal boat and later by motor bus.

Their dress and ways set them apart in this modern age. They foreswear all ornament and their women cling to trailing skirts and plain hair-dos, no matter what the fashions may decree. Right now they chance to have "The New Look." The thrifty, hard-working Megiddos, who live so quietly the rest of the year, break into the headlines every April. For they believe that is the time of the true Christmas. They claim that the date observed by the rest of the world is derived from an old pagan festival.

\* \* \*

These are only some of the "Isms" that have enlivened the pages of Western New York history.

Perhaps it was the mystic quality of this countryside that made it such fertile soil for new religions.

Or is this "The Land of the Isms" because sincere religionists found a haven in these hills and valleys — as well as a tolerant spirit?

## *True to Type*

THE lumber wagon lurched and tossed in the turnpike ruts like a row boat on a choppy sea. It was blazing hot that June afternoon of 1816, but the sturdy bays plodded steadily westward, past Oneida Castle and the Indian huts, up the slope of Quality Hill.

It was cooler on that wooded summit and the driver reined in his team. He reckoned the horses deserved a breathing spell after the haul from Utica. The teamster had wanted to tarry in the tavern at the Castle where there was a plump barmaid with red hair. But the young men who had hired him was all for pushing on.

The driver wiped the sweat from his forehead with the back of a hairy hand and glanced back over his shoulder. Suddenly he poked the man on the seat beside him:

"Hey, Mr. Dauby, the type's gone!"

Augustine Dauby took one look and his face clouded. The clumsy old Ramage press was secure, roped to the side of the wagon. But the tail board of the wagon had given way and the three precious boxes of type had jolted off the end, somewhere along the road.

To the young printer it was a catastrophe. All he had saved from his meager pay as an apprentice printer on the Utica Patriot, all he could borrow, had gone into the equipment with which he was to set up his own printing shop in the new town of Rochesterville by the falls of the Genesee.

Dauby ordered the driver to turn back. For two days the two men searched every inch of the trail without finding a trace of the lost boxes.

Dauby told Hotchkiss, an inn-keeper at the "Turkey Street" crossroad near Oneida Castle, of his loss. The tavern man was wise in the ways of the frontier and he made a suggestion:  
"Maybe the Indians found them."

There were many Indians thereabouts, for the Castle was the ancient capital of the Oneida Nation. Hotchkiss warned Dauby that if the redskins had found the boxes of type, it would take some diplomacy and craft to recover them. Inquiries of friendly Oneidas, whose tongues were loosened by Hotchkiss' firewater, revealed that the Indians had indeed found the boxes, thought them full of specie from the government and had secreted them under a dead log, but for some reason had not yet opened them.

It was agreed that Dauby should open the boxes in the presence of an Indian chief. The printer pried them open, showed the Oneidas the type, something new to them, and explained its use. The chief grunted:

"No good wampum."

Copper colored hands were crossed with some real coin of the realm and the boxes were loaded back in the wagon with a new and stronger tailboard.

After five days, Oliver Culver's tavern, out East Avenue, was reached without further incident. From what was then called Brighton Hill, Augustine Dauby surveyed his Promised Land, the backwoods settlement that was to be the scene of his first business venture.

He was moved to write an ode, of which this is a stanza:

*"Here rests the traveler from his journey weary,  
On the high hill of Brighton, till he knew  
What are the bounds, the depths, the caverns dreary,  
Till he venture to the plain so low."*

The next day a wagon clattered over the wooden boards of the Main Street Bridge "on the plain so low" and drew up before A. Reynolds' tavern and postoffice between the Genesee and the Four Corners.

Rochester's first publisher had arrived.

\* \* \*

The frontier village by the falls was set in a sea of mud, dotted with stumps. It had less than 500 inhabitants. But frame structures that were aromatic of freshly cut pine were rising against the background of green forest. The ring of carpenters' hammers mingled with the ponderous chant of the wheel in Hervey Ely's Old Red Mill on the river bank.

There was an undertone of destiny about this raw young town that caught Augustine Dauby's imagination.

First, he had to hire a printer. There was none in Rochester-ville. But he heard that a competent man, John Sheldon, a former Utica acquaintance, was doing carpenter work out the West Ridge near Clarkson. Soon Sheldon joined him in setting up shop.

The press and the precious type were moved into the second floor of an unfinished building on the Main Street bridge at almost the identical site of the present Democrat and Chronicle Building. The structure was lathed inside but not plastered and the ground floor housed a butcher's stall.

The second hand, wooden frame press Dauby installed was the same kind that Benjamin Franklin had operated years before in Philadelphia. A flat bed affair with a crank and wooden handle, it took two men to operate it. In this day of giant rotary presses and linotype machines, it seems fantastically primitive.

But from that press came Rochester's first newspaper. The Gazette, in July, 1816.

Dauby soon moved to another location. Within two years he had a competitor in Everard Peck, founder of the Telegraph.

Rochesterville was growing but times were hard and money was tight. Printers had a hard time collecting their bills, sometimes taking produce in lieu of cash.

In 1819 fire swept Dauby's shop but he resumed publication the next year. In 1821 he sold out to Levi Sibley and moved back to Utica.

Rochesterville had not exactly been his "Promised Land."

In his footsteps followed a long line of notable editors. But Augustine Dauby was the pioneer.

\* \* \*

On January 18, 1847, the Printers of Western New York celebrated the 141st birthday of Benjamin Franklin — a day late — with a dinner at the Blossom House, on Main near St. Paul Street.

Franklin was one of the most versatile of Americans. He was a scientist, an author, a statesman, a diplomat, a politician, a business man, but above all, he was a printer and a publisher.

In Rochester's Public Library is a booklet written by Frederick Follett, telling in detail of the printers' festival on Franklin Day a century ago. In those days the term printer was synonymous with editor and publisher. It was not yet the age of specialization and every newspaper and printing shop proprietor knew how to set type and how to run a press.

The meal served at the Blossom House is described as "substantial, with all the dainties of the season gotten up in splendid style." At the head of the table was a model of the then outmoded Ramage press such as Ben Franklin — and Augustine Dauby — had used.

At least 30 toasts are listed. If they were drunk in the strong

spirits of the period, one wonders how many printers were able to leave the Blossom House under their own power.

Leaders of the industry were there from all over the state. Among them was a dignified, middle aged gentleman, the successful publisher of the Utica Observer.

His name was Augustine G. Dauby.

## *Sam's Last Leap*

**S**AM PATCH never lived here. But he died here and the manner of his death put Rochester and the Falls of the Genesee on the tongues of thousands.

Had his second plunge over the upper falls that chill November 13 of 1829 been successful, Rochester would have been just another place where the Jersey Jumper performed.

But his failure, before the horrified eyes of thousands, gave birth to a multitude of legends, ballads, poems, sermons and editorials. Through the 1830's and '40's and even later, hundreds came to Rochester just to view the scene of Sam's last leap.

Among them was Nathaniel Hawthorne, who philosophized over the daredevil's career. William Dean Howells years later wove the story of Patch into his novel, "The Wedding Journey." For years, New York Central trains stopped at the falls that passengers might see the place where Sam Patch leaped.

For decades, Rochester was associated in the national mind with the leaper of cataracts. The exhibitionist captured the imagination of America, just as in later eras did Blondin on his tight rope; Steve Brodie, the bridge jumper; automobile speed kings, pioneer barnstorming stunt flyers; "human flies" and the like. Sam Patch was a pioneer in a long procession.

Now he is all but forgotten. Relatively few Rochesterians know his story and fewer his last resting place. Sam Patch lives today only in the folklore of the land.

\* \* \*

Samuel Patch was a native of New England but the place and date of his birth are obscure. He generally is believed to

have been born in Pawtucket, R. I., about 1807 but relatives have insisted the birthplace was South Reading, Mass. and the date was prior to 1807.

At any rate it is established that as a youth Sam was living with his widowed mother in Pawtucket and working in the cotton mill near the falls there. The mill hands would swim in the river and dive from the bridge over it. The more daring, including young Patch, used to jump from the roof of a paper mill, 100 feet above the water. Thus early in life Sam became an expert jumper-swimmer.

He put his earnings into a cotton mill at Central Falls, R. I. but that enterprise went on the rocks when his partner absconded with the firm's treasury. That reverse sent Sam to Paterson, N. J. to work as a spinner in a cotton mill.

In the New Jersey town, the picturesque Passaic Falls and chasm provided a natural setting for his jumping prowess. September 30, 1827, marks the real beginning of his career as an exhibitionist. On that date when crowds had gathered for the placing of the first bridge across the chasm, Sam gave them a thrill with a 70-foot jump from the highest cliff, eluding the town constables ordered to halt the leap, by suddenly darting from behind a tree to make his plunge.

The stunt gained him wide notoriety and he did little cotton spinning the remaining two years of his life. He repeated the Paterson jump in July, 1828, and in August made a 90-foot plunge at Hoboken from a platform atop the masthead of a sloop moored offshore.

Sam Patch's fame grew and he sought new worlds to conquer. The mighty falls of the Niagara beckoned him and on October 6, 1828, he was scheduled to leap off the Table Rock to celebrate the blasting off of a portion of dangerous cliff

overhanging the chasm from the Canadian side. But Sam arrived a day too late for the event and the citizenry of the Niagara Frontier saw the schooner *Superior* go crashing over the precipice as the substitute feature of the program.

The next day Sam made a 70-foot jump before a meager crowd, from the lower end of Goat Island. He planned a greater spectacle and the region was plastered with placards advertising a leap over the falls on October 17 from a height of 120 feet. Dr. Richard M. Dorson, in the *New York Folklore Quarterly*, described the scene thus:

"The wooded islet splitting the cataract in an uneven half between the American and Horseshoe Falls provided a logical springboard. Observers congregated on the island and lined the American and Canadian shores. For this second leap the platform on Goat Island stood about two-thirds the elevation of the 160-foot-high neighboring banks, a fearful height when scanned from the depths below.

"On this rainy Saturday, Sam boldly climbed the perpendicular ladder to the scaffold despite tearful farewells and protestations from persons at the foot. Before ascending he shed his shoes and coat and tied a handkerchief around his neck. . . . He mounted the narrow, reeling platform, barely large enough for a man to sit upon and for 10 minutes, displayed his poise and tested the stand while the spectators cheered.

"At length he rose upright, took the kerchief from his neck and tied it about his waist, waved his hand, kissed the American flag which flew above his head and stepped off steadfastly into the swirling flood. A general cry of 'He's dead! He's lost' swept through the crowd, according to one account; a second reports a benumbed silence, broken only by joyous congratulations when Sam's head burst out of the waters."

That was the Jersey Jumper's greatest triumph. He became a national hero and his ambition soared. He dreamed of jumping off London Bridge some day.

But for the present, there were Rochester and the Genesee Falls less than 70 miles away.

\* \* \*

So in late October, Samuel Patch, in the company of a pet bear and a pet fox, came to the mill town beside the Genesee.

It was an exciting period in the life of the nation and of the frontier.

Rochester was a roaring young town, with her power-laden falls and her position on the new Erie Canal. Throughout Western New York there was great excitement over the disappearance of William Morgan and the rise of the new Anti-Masonic Party and over the reported discovery of golden plates in a Palmyra hillside and the founding of a new church by an erstwhile farm lad named Joseph Smith.

That was the stage on which entered reckless, ebullient Sam Patch. He was only about 22 years old but with growing fame and fattening purse from his jumps.

In personal appearance he apparently was not prepossessing as A. J. Langworthy of Rochester later told of a "tramp coming to the foundry near the precipice and stating his desire to jump the falls." Sam had a weakness for the flagon. While not illiterate, he had little education and was as uncouth as the times. Of his personal bravery and his consummate showmanship there can be no doubts.

In Rochester at the time was a coterie of young bloods who patronized sporting events. This group proceeded to promote Sam's proposed leap and to lodge him and his pets at the rendezvous known as the Recess in Exchange Street.

The Daily Advertiser on October 29 announced "Another Leap. Sam Patch against the World. . . . He puts off the jump till after election out of regard for all parties. Let every man do his duty at the polls and Sam will afterward do his at the Falls."

November 6 was the date set for the spectacle and 3,000 gathered around the Upper Falls to witness the 100-foot plunge. Sam, confident and jaunty, led his pet bear by a chain to the jutting rock and sent the animal whirling into the water. The bear emerged and swam safely to the bank.

Then Patch, with the inevitable kerchief sash, bowed, poised and leaped over the cataract. His head bobbed up several rods downstream and scorning a small boat waiting to take him aboard, he swam and waded to shore — again a hero.

Flushed with triumph, Sam planned a second and greater feat. The leap would be extended to 125 feet by erection of a 25-foot platform on the rock above the Genesee Falls. The date was set for Friday, the Thirteenth of November. Evidently Sam was afraid of nothing, not even jinxes.

Between his two jumps, he scared his promoters by leaping into the canal off the Fitzhugh Street bridge and swimming to a hiding place under the span while his friends were searching frantically for him.

\* \* \*

November 13, 1829, was a raw day. But some 7,000 people from all over Western New York came, by stage coach, canal boat, horse and wagon and afoot, to swarm around the jumping off place at the Genesee.

Promptly at 2 p. m. Sam walked out on the grassy rock. He wore a light woolen jacket and a skull cap, besides white pantaloons, part of a band uniform borrowed from William

Cochrane, and John O'Donahue's black silk handkerchief knotted about his midriff.

There were those in the crowd who thought Patch lacked his usual aplomb when he mounted to the scaffold. Some thought he swayed, which gave rise to the story he was intoxicated. Another account insists he drank only a single glass of brandy to fortify himself against the chill.

Sam, as was his custom, made a little speech: "Napoleon was a great man and a great general. He conquered armies and he conquered nations. But he couldn't jump the Genesee Falls. Wellington was a great man and a great general. He conquered Napoleon. But he couldn't jump the Genesee Falls. That was left for me and I can do it and I will."

Then he leaped, but without his usual arrowy precision. Ordinarily in falling, he retained in midair complete command of his motions. This time his arms parted from his sides, he lost control of his body and he struck the water obliquely with arms and legs extended.

A great gasp of horror arose from the crowd. The Jersey Jumper was never seen alive again.

What became of the bear is a mystery. Bruin was scheduled to jump at 3 p. m. Some local accounts have Patch tossing the animal in the river before he made his fatal jump.

The river was dragged in vain for the body of Patch. The next March 17 a farmer at Charlotte breaking the river ice to water his horse, found the body, identified by the borrowed pantaloons and kerchief.

Sam Patch was laid to rest in the pioneer cemetery along Charlotte's River Street on the bluff above the river in which he had died. For years a board marker stood at the grave. On it were the words "Here lies Sam Patch. Such is fame." The

headboard rotted away and then there was no marker until a tin one was nailed to a Norway spruce tree in 1912. The tree died and pupils of Charlotte High School in 1945 placed a boulder at the grave of the Jersey Jumper across the way from their classrooms.

\* \* \*

After Sam Patch's death, he continued for many a year to live in legend and ballad.

Despite the finding of the body, at intervals from all over the country came reports of impostors, claiming to be the "true Patch."

Then there sprang up a legend that a ghost-like figure in skull cap and jacket, had been seen at dusk, poised on the rock above the foaming waters of the Genesee.

But that was long ago — when Sam Patch and Rochester were linked in the mind of America. And slowly the wonder died away.

And now he is forgotten — save by folklore students and the youngsters who tend a lonely grave in old Charlotte.

## *The Monster in the Lake*

**I**N the hills of northern Wyoming County lies a sheet of placid water four miles long and some three quarters of a mile wide. Its glistening sheen on a moonlight night long ago impelled the pioneers to name it Silver Lake.

The Indians knew it well. There is a legend that the Red Men shunned it because they believed there was a monster in its depths. But the white men have fished there for many a year and thousands of picnickers have frolicked on its shores.

Ninety-three years ago the fierce white light of nation-wide notoriety beat upon the peaceful hill-girt lake — for a brief time.

On the night of June 13, 1855, five men of the community climbed into a rowboat with their fishing paraphernalia for a night of sport. There was no liquor aboard. They were temperate, substantial men.

Within an hour they were rowing frantically back to shore white faced, as if the devil himself were at their stern. The story they gasped out shattered for weeks the calm of Silver Lake, sent thousand flocking to its shores and gave birth to a legend.

One of the fishermen had seen what he took to be a log not far from shore. He mentioned it to his companions. To their amazement the object began to move — toward them. As it neared their boat, they saw it was a great reptile, 80 feet long, with bright red eyes in a head 15 inches in diameter and with a mighty lashing tail. As they gazed, the creature's mouth squirted water four feet into the air. It was then the fishermen started rowing like mad for shore.

The tale spread around the countryside. Next night some bathers saw the monster. The local newspapers ran the story

and it went over the wires throughout the nation. People began pouring in by rail, by canal boat, by horse and carriage, by stage, afoot. The hotels at the lake and in the neighboring village of Perry were crammed to the eaves and private homes went into the tourist business. It was a time of real prosperity, as well as real terror, for the community.

A committee of vigilantes was formed to capture the monster. A whaleman was imported and came with harpoons, lances, coils of rope and other equipment but the creature evaded him. Live ducks and chickens were attached to hooks in an effort to catch the serpent. Citizens even formed a stock company called "The Experiment Corporation" to finance the capture of the monster. The terror grew when a farmer reported a steer missing in the marshes around the lake. The country folk believed the great snake had seized the animal.

Then as the excitement reached its height, the thing vanished from the lake. Gradually the tumult died down and the stream of visitors stopped. But for many a day fishermen and bathers still shunned the waters which had housed the terror.

Two years later came the denouement. Fire swept the Walker House, a leading hostelry in Perry. When volunteers, trying to save property forced their way into the attic of the hotel, they came upon a curious thing. It was a huge strip of canvas made into the shape of a serpent and painted dull green with bright yellow spots. Its eyes and mouth were a brilliant red.

Flames had done what human ingenuity and vigilance could not do — fathom the mystery of the Silver Lake Sea Serpent.

Then the whole story came out. Business had been woefully slack that early summer of 1855 at the lake and A. B. Walker, an enterprising hotel man, hit upon a scheme to pep it up. He

confided in a little group of friends. Night after night they worked in an old tannery in a lake outlet ravine putting Walker's idea into tangible form.

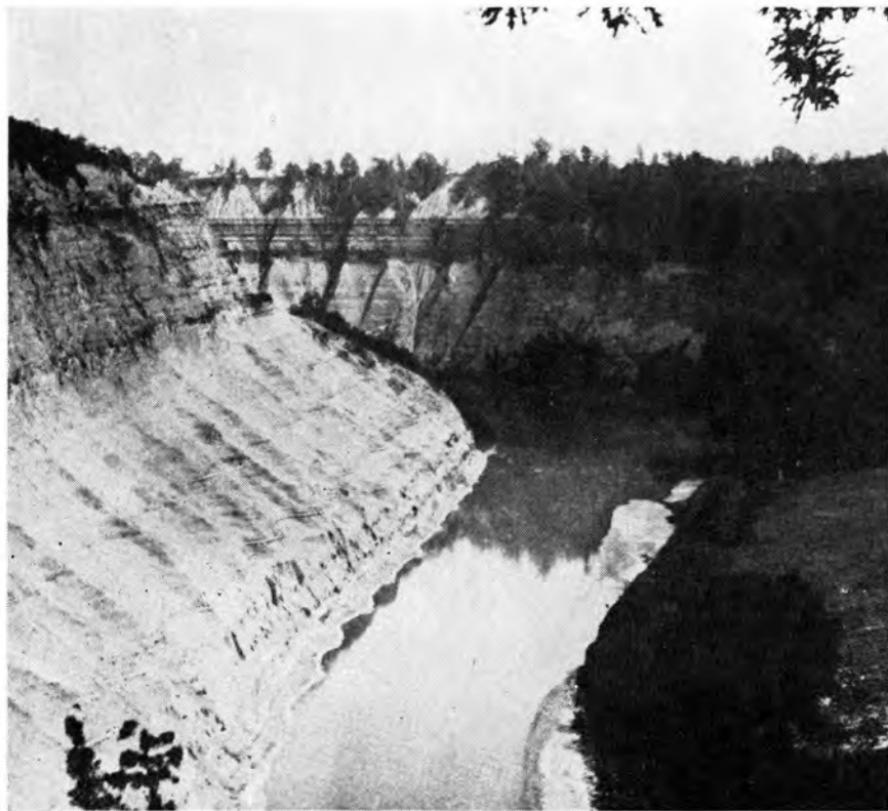
Painstakingly they built the serpent out of water-proof canvas, supported on the inside by coiled wires, then painted it in fear-provoking hues. Then they dug a trench and laid a gas pipe in it from the basement of a shanty on the west shore. In the shanty they set up a bellows like that used by a blacksmith and connected it with a small light rubber hose that ran through the pipe from the shanty to the body of the serpent.

One night they took the creature of their creation out from its hiding place and sank it in the lake. A man in the shanty operated the bellows which forced the air into the snake, causing it to rise to the surface. Weights were attached to different portions of the body to insure its sinking as the air was allowed to escape. Ropes were attached to forward parts of the body, extending to three different points on the shore so that the monster might be propelled in any direction desired.

The conspirators' midnight experiment was a success. They watched the head of their monster rise gracefully to a height of about eight feet from the water as other parts of the long body became visible. The bellows-hose contraption worked perfectly.

Then on the night of June 13, 1855, the plotters saw a boat-load of fishermen going out into the lake and decided it was time to launch their great hoax.

But they found they had built a Frankenstein and were soon dismayed by the terror they had spread. They realized they would be harshly dealt with if their secret was disclosed. So again, working under the cover of darkness, they removed the monster from the lake and hid it in the attic of the Walker House.



*The High Banks of the Genesee and Mary Jemison, "The White Woman."*



*Andrews Street Bridge in Rochester during Great Flood of 1865.*

By the time fire revealed the hoax, the scare had died away and there was no prosecution.

So the Sea Serpent of Silver Lake passed into the folklore of the Genesee Country, a hoax like the Cardiff Giant of Central New York.

## *A Feud of the Old Canal*

**F**OR 28 years each man believed he had murdered the other.

For 28 years each life was shadowed by fear and remorse.

Finally they met face to face — under the most dramatic circumstances — and were fast friends for the rest of their days.

That's the essence of a strange tale I found tucked away in the back of a little old paper-covered book; the story of two fighting men and their feud on the old canal.

There's a girl in the story but the romance does not follow the conventional pattern of fiction.

But then this is a **TRUE** story.

The title of the little book is "Rochester and Its Early Canal Days," which came out here in 1914. It tells the reminiscences of the author, the late Captain H. P. Marsh of Rochester, "while engaged on the New York State waterways, the Erie, the Genesee Valley, the Black River and other lateral canals."

It contains much entertaining lore of Towpath days but this piece concerns only what the author called "The Great River Mystery."

Captain Marsh in the preface stated that the story was true in every detail; that only the names were fictitious. He also revealed that he was one of the actors in the drama. I suspect he was a leading one.

The tale begins in the Civil War year of 1862 and the principal characters are:

Daniel Somers, burly captain of the canal boat *Octoroon*, a jovial and capable canaler when sober, but "a drinking and sporting man" ashore, and quarrelsome in his cups.

Hank Millions, young steersman of the *Oriole*, quiet, of

good habits but a fearless, formidable fighting man when aroused.

It was in the brave days of old when canalers stood on their own two feet and fought with their own two fists — or whatever was handy — on towpath or berm bank or slippery deck.

The feud of this tale began at the locks of old Brighton where today roar the subway cars in the bed of the Clinton Ditch.

A young girl who had been serving as a cook for a few days on Captain Dan's boat leaped ashore with her little bundle of clothing. The pious wife of the Oriole's captain had persuaded the girl to desert the canal and go back to her family in Manchester.

Dan did not want to lose his pretty cook. He stopped his boat at the lower lock and ran after the girl who was fleeing toward the Oriole, just coming out of the middle lock.

The runaway had been carefully planned and the crew of the Oriole was on the lookout for the girl. Hank leaped ashore just as Dan caught the screaming fugitive. Hank made the captain release the girl. Then the two men squared off. It was a furious battle but while Dan was bigger and heavier than his younger antagonist, he also was slower and clumsier. So the set-to ended with the captain flat on his back. Meanwhile the girl was safely aboard the Oriole.

The beaten skipper slunk back to his Octofoon, vowing vengeance on the Oriole's crew, particularly Steersman Hank Millions.

The girl, the innocent cause of the feud, went ashore at Palmyra and back to her family. She figures no more in this story.

\* \* \*

The crew of the Oriole, knowing Dan Somers and his ways, foresaw trouble next time his path crossed theirs.

They had not long to wait. One night, less than a fortnight after the Brighton incident, the Oriole was held up at Dunbarton by a line of canal boats a mile long. There was a break in the bank at Herkimer. The beam of the Oriole's headlight picked out the name of the boat ahead. It was the Octo-ron.

Daylight disclosed another neighbor, a sunken, wood-hauling boat, alongside. Its crew, consisting of captain, steersman, driver and a 16-year-old cook, the captain's sister, were all young Germans from Verona. On Captain Swarts' first trip, the old boat had leaked so badly that the crew was forced to unload its cargo to keep the hulk above water. All the crew, including the girl, were pumping like mad.

Hank offered his aid and succeeded in stopping the leak by throwing sawdust into the seams of the boat. The Germans were grateful and the girl, Margaret, smiled brightly on Hank Millions. She was a yellow haired, doll-faced lass with eyes as blue as the cornflowers that grew in the fields. She could speak little English — but that did not matter. With Hank it was love at first sight.

In the meantime Captain Dan Somers was getting drunk at a canal grocery. Returning to his boat, he spied the girl and yelled: "Say, wood girl, want a berth on a nice, clean grain boat?" Captain Swarts spoke up: "My sister goes on no boat but mine."

When Dan began calling the Germans names, Hank stepped forward and rebuked the captain for "insulting people who have had such bad luck."

"Shut up, you young whelp," was Dan's reply — and the battle was on.

Again the clumsy, unsteady captain was no match for the younger man. The fight ended with Hank and the German captain carrying the vanquished Dan to the Octoroon where they slung him on his own deck. His crew took their skipper below and soon Hank heard his savage bellow: "If you ever come near me again, Millions, I'll kill you."

The next day the wood boat reloaded and shoved off for Syracuse. Hank Millions was at the wheel. He had obtained leave from the Oriole to help the Germans complete their haul. The bright smile and the blue eyes of Margaret had ensnared him.

The Germans had had enough of canaling and despite Hank's entreaties, were determined to return to their farm at Verona.

So there was a sad parting. Margaret was in tears when Hank kissed her, vowing he would never forget her and would return to her.

\* \* \*

After Hank rejoined the Oriole, the boat joined a large steamboat tow going down the Hudson from Albany to New York. When the tow was made up, fate ordained that the Oriole and the Octoroon should lie side by side.

When at dusk the steamboat whistled to cast off shore lines, Dan Somers walked unsteadily aboard his boat, a flask protruding from his hip pocket.

At 1 o'clock the next morning Hank went on watch. That same hour Dan took up the watch on the Octoroon. The night was still and soon Hank heard Dan's low fierce challenge.

"Now is your time. Come over and let's see who is the better man."

Hank retorted: "I licked you twice and I can do it again in

a couple of minutes." Names were called until Hank, thoroughly enraged, jumped on the Octofoon's deck. Captain Dan sprang for him. Hank ducked a swinging blow, grappled with the older man, pulled him to the side of the boat and with a mighty heave, sent him overboard.

Swiftly Hank's rage cooled and fear took its place. He had drowned the captain. He might be arrested for murder. There was no sign of life on the tow. No one apparently had witnessed the fight.

As dawn broke, Hank saw a "bum boat" approaching the tow. A "bum boat" is a large rowboat, laden with vegetables for the canal trade, which fastens its lines to the various craft and tows along until all are served. Hank beckoned the oarsman alongside and hired him to row him ashore for \$10.

On his heart was written the brand of Cain — the word murder. He took the first train for Albany, had a barber shave off his mustache, went to the nearest recruiting office and enlisted in the Union Army. Before night he was on a troop train rattling southward.

Hank Millions served creditably during the war. At night by the flickering light of southern camp fires he would write in his diary and on many a page was written the name of Margaret Swarts.

After the war, not daring to return East, he shipped on steamboats on the Mississippi and on the Great Lakes. Always his thoughts were of York State, the Clinton Ditch and a young girl with eyes of cornflower blue.

Finally he shoved his fears aside and went to Verona, looking for Margaret. Those who had known him failed to recognize him. His hair was graying and worry had lined his face. He learned that Margaret's parents were dead, that her

brother never came back from the war, that she had married and gone to Buffalo to run a grocery. No one seemed to recall her husband's name but old neighbors thought she was a widow now.

So Hank went to Buffalo and walked the streets, hoping to see the girl of his dreams. After weeks he gave up the quest as hopeless, bought a boat and again "was navigating on the Erie Canal." He prospered but the desire to find Margaret and the knowledge of his guilt always obsessed him.

\* \* \*

Years later, in Buffalo, he came across a canaler who said the former Margaret Swarts had a grocery on Ohio Street but he did not know the number. He thought her husband's name had been Miller.

Hank went to Ohio Street and found a dingy store with a tilted sign which read: "Grocery by Mike Miller."

With wildly beating heart, he opened the door and was greeted by the yells of a half dozen dirty, ragged youngsters of assorted ages. A slovenly, red-faced woman was sorting potatoes in a corner. Her rolled-up sleeves revealed fat and grimy arms.

Hank asked for a cigar. The woman went to a bar room reeking with the odor of stale beer. A few rough looking characters were playing cards at a smeary table. Hank looked keenly at the woman. Her stringy hair was a mixture of gray and sorrel; she had two chins but her eyes were as blue as the cornflowers that grew in the fields along the canal. As she handed over the cigar, Hank asked her, in a voice that shook a little:

"Is your name Miller?"

"It vas vonce."

"Did you ever live in Verona?"

"Ja, when I was a girl."

"What was your name then?"

"Margaret Swarts. Vat you vanta know fer?"

Hank was stunned. So this slattern was the girl of whom he had dreamed those lonely nights on Southern battlefields, those long nights on the waterways.

He stammered something about her reminding him of some one he had known and remarked: "It must be hard for you to tend store and support so many children with no husband."

"I got one already. He iss Dick Blum, a dock walloper."

Hank fled to the street. He tossed a vile-smelling cigar into the gutter. Love's young dream had turned into a nightmare.

\* \* \*

A few days later Hank hitched a ride from a wharf at the foot of Buffalo's Main Street on a shipper's tug that he knew would be passing by his own boat, moored up Buffalo Creek. Unnoticed by the crew, he sat on the stern, buried in his thoughts.

The tug scraped another boat and the jar threw Hank into the water. He was struggling valiantly when a wooden fender with rope attached hurtled toward him. He grabbed it and was towed by an unseen hand to the stern of a canal boat. There he seized the rudder blade and climbed aboard.

As he stepped, exhausted, on the dock, a big gray-bearded man came toward him. There was something familiar about the burly man who wore a captain's cap.

Each took a long look at the other. Each thought he was seeing a ghost. Then each gave a shout of joy and began hugging the other.

The man who had rescued Hank Millions was Daniel

Somers, his old enemy, the man he had believed at the bottom of the Hudson for 28 years.

How had Captain Dan escaped death that night when Hank had, as he thought, tossed him into the river?

Unbeknown to the after watch, the steamer of the tow earlier that night had hitched onto Dan's boat a small barge loaded with oats. Its crew was sleeping soundly while Hank and Dan were fighting on the deck of the Octoroon. As no rain appeared imminent, the hatch covering the oats had been left open.

So instead of pitching his enemy into the river, Hank had flung him down the hatchway on the oats. Dan was unhurt and when his drink-fogged brain cleared, he had the impression he had sent Hank overboard in the struggle, for he remembered hearing a splashing sound. What he had heard probably was the splash of a wooden fender which had been knocked overboard during the fracas. One was missing from the Somers boat the next morning.

When Hank Millions was nowhere to be found the next morning, Captain Dan felt himself to be a murderer. His feud with Hank was well known, suspicion fell upon him and he was questioned but maintained he had not seen Hank that night. Finally Hank was given up for dead. His friends cast many a dark look at Captain Dan.

After that Dan Somers never drank another drop. He married a schoolmate in his native Pennsylvania village and took his wife along on all his canal trips. He became prosperous and respected but always his guilty secret haunted him.

That day, 28 years after the Hudson River climax of the feud, Dan had been dozing in his locker when the jar caused by the tug scraping his boat awakened him. He went on deck

and saw a tug coming up Buffalo Creek. He heard a splashing below, saw a struggling man in the water and pulled to safety his old enemy.

And so ends "The Great Mystery," except for the bosom friendship between Hank Millions and Dan Somers that endured as long as they lived.

## *The Great Flood*

*(This story of Rochester's greatest flood, which occurred on March 17, 1865, is written, wholly in a spirit of reverence, in the style of the narrative of another, far greater flood, as recorded in an old, old Book).*

**A**ND it came to pass after a long season of exceeding cold that the snows lay heavy on the valley of the Genesee.

And the sun prevailed for seven days and the snows upon the hills and the snows upon the lowlands melted and the ice on the face of the river was broken up.

Then the windows of heaven were opened and the rains fell and all the little streams rushed down the hills to increase greatly the waters of the valley.

And the ice floes gathered to clog the channel where the earth bank bore the railroad called Erie across the plain of Avon. The waters to the south rose exceedingly and were pent up in the valley as far as the place called Mount Morris.

In a night of high wind the earthwork did yield to the might of the waters.

And the flood was loosed on the city that lieth in the midst of a river where the wheels of the mills were turned by the waterfalls.

That was in the one thousand, eight hundred and sixty-fifth year, in the third month and the seventeenth day.

But they who dwelt in the city knew not of the enemy that was at their gates.

\* \* \*

And the waters tore up great trees by their roots and snatched away the small buildings and skiffs of the farmers.

Horses cried out in their fright and cattle and swine and fowl and beasts of the field were slain and borne away by the waters and only the birds of the air were unafraid.

And those who lived in the low lands beside the river fled to the upper rooms and watched and could do naught.

A rooster and his flock rode on the ridge of a poultry house. A pig grunting in his pen floated on the face of the waters. And there were carcasses of dead beasts and logs and the wreckage of buildings.

But the city slept and knew not of the rush of waters upon it.

\* \* \*

In the morning the city awoke and saw the flood prevail.

Those who dwelt in the city heard the roar of the waters, the thud of timbers against the buildings, the cries of affrighted beasts.

And the spires of the city that day did look down upon a sullen, yellow sea.

The waters of the river swelled the waters of the Valley Canal and its banks were overflowed. And the greater canal called the Erie could not contain the currents from its feeder.

And the waters poured over the walls of the basin called Child's and through the streets called Aqueduct, Buffalo, Graves and Front.

Until soon the central part of that city that was on the low ground lay under the waters from one to six feet in depth.

And rowboats went about rescuing those that were in danger and supplying the hungry with food.

And there were in the city those who rowed their boats under the entrance arch of the Reynolds Arcade and reached up from their boats to take their mail from the boxes in that place.

But in the street called Water the currents ran too swiftly even for the rowboats.

That selfsame day the waters kept rising. And there was a log jam at the Aqueduct where the canal passeth over the river.

And pieces of lumber from the yards of the city floated in the streets. Stone walls were beaten down and the stones were scattered wide.

In the marketplace, the doors were ripped away and the windows. And the goods of the merchants were lost in the waters.

And the bridge that bore the steam trains over the river was destroyed and there was no travel in or out of the city that day.

All that night the waters prevailed. And the city was in darkness for the waters had broken the gas pipes. And there were few who slept and many who fled to the high ground.

\* \* \*

It came to pass on the afternoon of the second day that the water abated.

And on the third day the streets of the city were clear again.

And a stench arose from the dead beasts and from the flotsam and jetsam after the water had receded.

And the city took count of the havoc that had been wrought and it was a million of dollars.

Yet no life of a man, woman or child in that city was lost.

\* \* \*

And the city put its house in order and soon there was no trace of that time when the fountains of the great deep had broken up and the windows of heaven were opened.

But in the after time the rains came and the ice dammed the channels and waters descended again and again and there was exceeding great damage, even into the millions of dollars.

And it came to pass that the city wearied of the floods and did contrive to tame and master the river.

And there were no more great floods in the city that lieth in the midst of a river.

## *John L. Sullivan vs. John Barleycorn*

FOR hours the lobby and bar of the Livingston Hotel in Rochester's Exchange Street have been filled with cigar-smoking men in derby hats and fancy vests, bisected by massive watch chains.

Nearly all the sporting fraternity of the city is there. The air that hot July afternoon is tense with expectancy.

"Where is the champ? Where is John L.?" men ask each other as the twilight shadows begin to fall. They watch the door for the sight of a familiar figure, a mammoth, barrel-chested, ham-handed, hazel-eyed, gaily garbed Irishman and the sound of a familiar voice roaring:

"My name is John L. Sullivan and I can lick any ----- in the world. And the drinks are on me."

The date is July 2, 1889, and "the Battle of the Century" is only six days away. "Somewhere near New Orleans," John Lawrence Sullivan, the Boston Strong Boy, is to defend his heavyweight boxing title against Jake Kilrain.

The press had stated that Sullivan was to arrive in Rochester that evening from his training camp at Belfast, a Genesee River village more than 70 miles to the southward; that he probably would stop at the Livingston Hotel before boarding his special train for the South.

The waiting crowd knows that the special train is in the New York Central yards, steam up. It knows, too, that a morning train brought to town a delegation of wise-eyed New Yorkers, their pockets filled with bills, and among them Sullivan's backers, Jimmy Wakeley and Charley Johnson. They are to accompany the champ on the special train.

But the crowd waits in vain. No John L. appears in the Livingston House. His special pulls out of the Central yards without him.

Later on the crowd learns that Sullivan came to town from Belfast on the Western New York & Pennsylvania, now the Olean branch of the Pennsylvania Railroad, got off at the West Main Street station, hopped into a carriage, was driven to Chili, whence he walked the dirt road to Churchville where the special train picked him up.

The boys at the Livingston House are perplexed. It isn't like John L. to give his waiting admirers the slip. It was not like that at all when the champ was here in 1882 on a barnstorming tour and Fireman John McDermott lasted three rounds before he fell under the Big Fellow's flailing fists. No, John L. liked people, liked to play the conquering hero. He was never one to dodge crowds. What had come over John L.?

\* \* \*

The answer was Billy Muldoon, his trainer for the past three months. In the code of that puritanical Irishman with the frosty blue eyes and the unbending will, visits to the bars by a defending champion on the eve of a crucial fight had no place.

William Muldoon had hardly let the irresponsible, drama-loving Sullivan out of his sight during the rigorous training period in Belfast and he was taking no chances in Rochester.

So the Sullivan Special rolled on to New Orleans. The rest is an oft told tale; how to dodge the law, the gladiators met at Richburg, Miss., and toe to toe, fought 75 rounds; how after two hours and 18 minutes of bare knuckle fighting under the old London ring rules, the seconds of the battered Kilrain tossed in the towel to save their man from being beaten to death.

The world marveled at the comeback Sullivan had staged for it was common knowledge in sporting circles that a few months before, John Barleycorn had John L. Sullivan nearly on the ropes. The answer to the "miracle" again was Billy Muldoon.

We must go back a few years to the time when Muldoon, then wrestling champion of the world, had taken under his wing a hulking Boston Irish lad, had clad him in fine raiment and given him his first chance in a New York ring.

The Irish lad did not stick to Muldoon. He took up other managers. Still John Lawrence Sullivan went his happy-go-lucky way down the glory road, finally to become champion of the world. He came to like the taste of champagne, to keep irregular hours, to consort with disreputable characters, to go on terrific benders and when he was finally induced to sign for the Kilrain fight, he was, to quote Muldoon, "a drunken, bloated mass of flesh and bone without a single dollar in his pocket."

But he still was undefeated champion of the world, he still had a powerful, albeit much abused, body and he still was the idol of the multitudes.

So Billy Muldoon made a daring proposition. Sullivan's backers had bound themselves to a side bet of \$10,000 on the Kilrain bout. Muldoon offered to put Sullivan in shape for the fight. If John L. won, the ten grand was Muldoon's. If he lost, all the trainer's efforts were to go for naught. Muldoon insisted on one thing — that the champion be put under his absolute control.

With his beloved title at stake, John L. would agree to anything. So it came to pass that in the late Spring of 1889, the wreck of what had been America's finest fighting man went

down to Belfast in Allegany County to train under the most exacting martinet the sports world ever knew.

\* \* \*

It was not by chance that Belfast, a farming community in the foothills beside the narrow, meandering Genesee, was chosen for the training camp. Billy Muldoon had been born in those hills. The red-thatched farm boy became known as the strongest lad in that countryside. At 18 he was a soldier in the Union Army with Phil Sheridan's cavalry. After the Civil War he went to New York, joined the police force, became its best wrestler and eventually Graeco-Roman wrestling champion of the universe, retiring undefeated.

Billy Muldoon was an actor, too, appearing with Maurice Barrymore as Charles the Wrestler in "As You Like It." He was a respected figure in the sports world of 1889. To him the human body was a holy temple and he who profaned it by loose living of any sort was an utter fool. Physical fitness was a fetish with him. This grim, implacable tyrant became trainer, guardian and veritable jailer of the jovial, swash-buckling Sullivan, who loved wine, women and song and detested rules and restraint.

Muldoon some years before had built in the center of Belfast village a house with wide porches on all sides. There were other buildings, a training stable, a carriage house and servants' quarters, a horse barn and eventually, a bowling alley.

Belfast, then as now, was a village of less than 1,000 people. Across the street from the Muldoon property was the Catholic Church and cemetery, with the Protestant burying ground nearby. It was a quiet place, probably the quietest that John L., who loved the bright lights, had ever known.

Sullivan ordered his extensive wardrobe shipped to Belfast. Muldoon countermaned the order. Fancy clothes did not fit into his training system.

That was the beginning of an epic clash of wills between the two strong Irishmen that long gone summer that has given rise to countless stories and legends that still live in the river towns.

Belfast had one hotel and one saloon. Muldoon forbade either to sell John L. Sullivan a drink. He banned all reporters from the camp, with one exception. That exception was Ban Johnson, who later organized and headed the American Baseball League. Muldoon wanted no out-of-town visitors around either. So he engaged every room in the village hotel. He also warned the townspeople to keep away from his charge.

Under those restrictions, Sullivan, a sick man because of his debauches, began the most severe training any boxer up to that time had ever undergone.

Muldoon hardly let John L. out of his sight. He even slept on a cot beside him at night. Soon the regular hours, wholesome food, country air and abstemious living began to bear fruit. The fighter had a wonderful constitution to begin with.

From morn to night the relentless Muldoon put his man through the paces — dumbbell exercises, gruelling road work over rough highways, wrestling, punching the bag, tossing the medicine ball (a Muldoon creation), rope skipping. Muldoon was a pioneer in that type of training routine.

The high spirited Sullivan rebelled. Muldoon never yielded an inch. For two days the two men never spoke to each other. John L. was the first to give ground. When the day for the fight drew near, Billy knew his work had been good. It was

a far different champion who left Belfast July 2 than the sodden wreck who had landed there a few short months before.

\* \* \*

Charles Van Every's biography of Muldoon, "The Solid Man of Sport," pictures the road work at Belfast as seen through the eyes of Ban Johnson.

Muldoon, stalking grimly ahead, would set the pace for Sullivan's morning workout over eight miles of country road. Twenty-five feet behind trotted John L., roughly clad and gripping a black-thorn stick, with Mike Cleary, assistant trainer, at his side. Three dogs brought up the rear. Friends and well wishers who wanted to accompany the champion were brusquely told by Muldoon to "move on". He kept Sullivan at this grind day after day.

Old timers in Allegany County claim Muldoon sometimes drove a team of horses hitched to a buckboard on these hikes, with Sullivan trotting behind. The route followed a road east of the river, thence to Caneadea, where there was a tavern. There John L. was allowed one glass of beer — and only one. Then the retinue went back to camp via the main road through Oramel.

Van Every tells how once the boxer broke loose from his jailer and reached the village's only saloon where he cowed the proprietor into serving him drinks. As usual, he bought for all hands in the place.

Muldoon heard of it and came on the run. With one sweep of his mighty arm, he cleared the bar of the round of drinks and gave the saloon keeper the tongue lashing of his life. In the meantime John L. had fled. Muldoon knew where to find him — at the only other bar in town. There Sullivan had

terrorized the hotel keeper into pouring him a drink when Muldoon burst in. The trainer tossed \$25 on the bar and told the proprietor to close up for the night.

John L. made a vain try for more booze at the drug store, but the druggist fearing Muldoon more than the giant fighter, turned him away. When Sullivan came back to the white house, "The Solid Man" had it out with "The Strong Boy". In effect Muldoon told Sullivan: "One more break like that and I am through and you lose your title." That sobered John L., at least for the time being.

Local legend has it that Sullivan eluded his jailer more than once and that on such occasions, the cry would go up in the quiet streets of Belfast: "John L. is loose again! Send for Muldoon!" Then women and children would scurry for cover and the Solid Man would clatter up to the hotel or saloon in his buckboard, throw Sullivan into the back of the vehicle and cart him back to camp.

Down the river they tell, too, how Sullivan wired his special girl friend, Ann Livingston, to visit him in Belfast and how Muldoon intercepted the telegram and sent another, commanding Ann to stay away.

There are scores of tales clustering about the great John's stay in the Genesee Valley that still persist. Whether it was during one of Sullivan's barnstorming tours or during the Belfast training period, legend has it that "Father" Charles Flaherty, Mount Morris' famous unfrocked priest, at one time put on the gloves with Sullivan and acquitted himself creditably.

For three years Muldoon maintained his camp in Belfast. He conditioned Kilrain and other sports luminaries there. Mike Cleary came back to Belfast to die. Police Superintendent Murray of New York was restored to health by the Muldoon

method. In 1892 the Solid Man founded his famous health center near White Plains and abandoned the Belfast camp.

He and Sullivan split after the Kilrain scrap and although there was a later reconciliation, they were never real friends again. John L. always stood in awe of his onetime trainer and looked back on his Belfast days in retrospective horror.

When John L. was buried, Muldoon attended the funeral and tears blurred his frosty blue eyes at the grave.

Billy Muldoon gave his Belfast property to the Catholic Church. The house where Sullivan had slept was for a while a home for nuns and to this day is known as the Convent House. It has been shorn of most of its porches. In one of the barns that was a training stable in '89 still hanging down from the ceiling are two iron rings on which once the mighty John L. swung.

Muldoon and John L. Sullivan are memory now. And the river towns will never see their like again.

And never again will the peace of Belfast be broken by the cry:

"John L. is loose again! Send for Muldoon!"

## *The Human Side of Susan B.*

UNKIND observers have labeled (or libeled) Rochester as a city of conformists.

Yet the greatest of all Rochesterians was an incorrigible rebel from childhood.

As you may have guessed, the heroine of this chapter is Susan Brownell Anthony.

Her name has become a symbol of the cause which she led for so many years. It is an irony of fate that the "Susan B. Anthony Amendment" to the Constitution, giving women the ballot, came 13 years after the suffrage leader had breathed her last.

Now her niche in history is secure. Many thick volumes have been written about her life and works. Her memory is perpetuated in marble and bronze. She belongs to the American immortals.

Perhaps she has become to many, especially those of a new generation, merely the symbol of a cause that was won long ago, only a name out of the past, just another figure in marble.

They know only the familiar picture of the rather stern visaged old lady in the spectacles, the neatly parted grey hair and the high lace collar. They see only the stubborn warrior, the fanatical doctrinaire, the iron willed spinster.

Possibly they never think of Susan B. Anthony as a fun loving girl playing around her Quaker home in the Berkshire hills; as the strong limbed young school teacher, with plenty of beaux who was called "the smartest woman in Canajoharie"; the young woman who picked apples and hoed corn and made soap on her father's farm out Brooks Avenue. They know of her long, untiring campaign for women suffrage and forget that she also fought for temperance and for emancipation of the slave.

In the world leader of a tremendous social movement, they are likely to lose sight of the warmly human person that was Susan B. Anthony of 17 Madison Street, Rochester, N. Y.

\* \* \*

She learned to read and write before she was five and at a tender age startled the village schoolmaster by asking to be taught long division, a branch of mathematics reserved for males. It was a significant portent.

At the age of 20 she was teaching a backwoods school near Center Falls, N. Y., for \$2.50 a week and board. A strong, well knit girl, she put down a revolt of troublesome farm louts in her classes, by scourging their leader, a big fellow, with a stick she had cut in the woods.

Susan knew manual labor. She helped out on the 32-acre farm her father bought in 1845 on the outskirts of Rochester, in what is now the Brooks Avenue sector. During the Civil War, she planted and harvested crops and sold them in the city. She cooked and washed and scrubbed and canned fruit and wove rag carpets. But that was only an interlude. Always the cause called her back to the battlefields.

Her physical and moral courage was unquestioned. She developed poise as a platform speaker but in her early days she had to conquer her own fears in addressing a crowd.

In the 1850's she attended a meeting of a state teachers' association of which women comprised two-thirds the membership but in which men did all the talking, voting and managing. She threw a bombshell by arising and demanding to speak. Such an act was unprecedented. For half an hour, the convention debated before she was granted the floor, by a majority of one vote. Here is how Rheta Childe Dorr, the biographer who paints the most human portrait of Susan B., describes the incident:

"During the entire time Susan stood, fearing if she sat down she might lose the floor. Straight and slim as a young pine tree, in her fine broche shawl and close fitting bonnet, she stood but her knees trembled and to hide the shaking of her hands, she had to keep them tightly clasped together. But when she spoke, it was in a clear, strong voice:

"Do you not see that so long as society says that woman has not brains enough to be a lawyer, doctor or minister, but has plenty to be a teacher every one of you who condescends to teach tacitly admits before all Israel and the sun that he has no more brains than a woman?"

The men teachers had no answer.

\* \* \*

In her school-teaching youth, she had many suitors. One was a well-to-do widower with a big farm and 60 milch cows. He sought her hand because she looked so strong and healthy and somewhat resembled his dead wife. The woman, who was to be enshrined in the hall of fame, did not choose to spend her days tending a herd of 60 cows.

The excessive drinking habits of the youth of the day also revolted Susan and probably had much to do with her state of spinsterhood.

But romance came into her life in 1854 when she was 34 years old and was stumping the state for the anti-slavery cause. In that bitter upstate winter, a handsome bearded man turns up as she is about to board the stage at Albany for Lake George. He has heard her speak and is impressed. He has a thick plank baked hot and puts it at her feet. At every stop he dashes out for a cup of tea and reheats the plank. Later on he appears with a sleigh and team and drives her from town

to town. She is comfortable under fur robes and with the inevitable hot plank at her feet.

"Several days of her unusual conversation, the proximity of her vital body and the gentleman's heart overflows and he implores Susan to leave this terrible life and share his heart, his home and hot baked plank forever," the Dorr biography relates.

Miss Anthony feels obliged to refuse. Thereafter she traverses the North Country alone and suffers chills and frost-bite and neuralgic pains.

But she was not the cold, sour faced spinster who all her life shunned male company that many may have pictured her.

\* \* \*

No doubt you've tuned in on national political conventions of late years and heard the "glamor girls" of the rival parties, like Clare Booth Luce and Helen Gehagen Douglas, draw the plaudits of the throngs.

Contrast the scene in 1868 when Susan B. Anthony came before the Democratic National Convention in Tammany Hall, New York. She had been refused permission to appear before the Republican conclave.

With dignity, the only woman in the hall, she advances to the platform and hands Horatio Seymour a memorial pleading for equal rights for women. She is greeted with howls of derision and raucous laughter from the delegates and her memorial is consigned to the committee on resolutions and an early grave.

But she is used to ridicule and to howling mobs and serenely goes her way. She has presented her memorial to a national political convention — and that is something.

She had a rapier-like wit and Horace Greeley was once its victim.

During a conference on suffrage, the editor asked her, sarcastically:

"Miss Anthony, you are aware that the ballot and the bullet go together. If you vote, are you prepared to fight?"

Susan flashed back:

"Certainly, Mr. Greeley, just as you fought in the late war — at the end of a goose quill."

After that, Horace Greeley was her enemy for life.

\* \* \*

Susan B. Anthony had a wide streak of tolerance in her makeup. Born in the strait laced Quaker faith, she became a member of the liberal Unitarian Church.

During the Chicago World's Fair in 1892, the issue of Sunday opening came up. Susan took the liberal side. When a horrified clergyman asked her "Would you allow a young man to go to a Wild West show on Sunday?" she answered: "Of course I would. In my opinion he'd learn more from Buffalo Bill than from listening to an intolerant sermon."

Colonel Buffalo Bill Cody had been her neighbor in Rochester. Hearing of her quip, the colonel sent her tickets for a box at one of his performances. When Buffalo Bill opened the show by riding in under a spotlight, he spurred his magnificent horse directly to Miss Anthony's party and reining the animal to its haunches, he struck off his sombrero with a flourish. Susan rose in acknowledgement and for a full minute the crowd cheered the suffragist and the showman — two of the strongest personalities ever to dwell in this city by the Genesee.

University of Rochester co-eds, surging to classes across the old campus that is now their very own, owe a special debt to the memory of Susan B. Anthony.

As early as 1856 she had urged co-education in colleges before a meeting of the state teachers' association.

In the late 1890's she carried on the fight in her own city. For years the University had stood adamant against the admission of woman students. But the trustees reversed their stand just before the turn of the century with the advent of a new president, a Baptist minister named Rush Rhees. They voted to receive woman students on equal standing with men—but with a condition. The women's organizations of the city must raise a \$100,000 endowment fund before September of 1900. When in June of that year only \$40,000 had been pledged, the college relented and cut the requirement to \$50,000.

Susan B. led the desperate drive for that last \$10,000. Finally with all but \$2,000 raised and the deadline hours away, she pledged her own life insurance to make up the deficit.

Her herculean efforts nearly cost her her life. She was nearly 80 years old and after victory had been won and future co-eds bearing armfuls of flowers had visited the house in Madison Street, she fell in a faint. Miss Anthony had suffered a slight stroke. She recovered but her vitality had been irrevocably sapped in that struggle.

In her journal in a shaky hand, in contrast to her usual bold script, she wrote that day:

"They let the girls in."

\* \* \*

Susan B. was never too pre-occupied with her campaigning to lose interest in her own neighborhood. When a big wooden apartment building arose at the southeast corner of Madison Street and Madison Park, she was sad because "it would spoil the view of the park from our house." She deplored, too, the cutting down of some of the park trees, particularly because "it was done on Lincoln's birthday."

And once when her train arrived in Rochester before day-break she sat for two hours reading her newspaper on the porch rather than disturb her sleeping sister.

Susan all her life had a very feminine liking for nice clothes. She always dressed in good taste and she was a striking figure in her high necked black satin dresses and old lace collars.

The Anthony Memorial today houses the rose red scarf she wore with such effect against her black gowns and also the famous garnet velvet dress she bought in London when she was presented to Queen Victoria.

When the great suffragist met the Widow of Windsor, she shook hands and said graciously, "How do you do?" She had forgotten that court etiquette called for her to kneel and kiss the monarch's hand. Or had she?

When in the twilight of her life, she attended the Women's World Congress in Berlin, she had a long chat with the German Empress, who insisted that the old lady remain seated.

Susan B. Anthony knew royalty and every President from Grant to Teddy Roosevelt, but she never lost the common touch nor forgot her humble neighbors. And she would stop to chat with an old Negro as graciously as she would receive a lord mayor.

\* \* \*

She left her imprint on the nation and on the world.

If she could only come back for just one Election Day and see the long tables in the voting booths, manned mostly by woman inspectors and see the women of all walks of life mingling in the voters' lineup, how her blood would dance. No doubt she would remember that Registration Day of 1872 when she led a handful of women through a crowd of gaping men in a shoe shop polling place at West Main and Prospect Streets,

cowed the male inspectors into registering them and set the stage for a national test of the election laws, braving imprisonment in the process.

She left her imprint on her city, as well.

She was one of the three charter members of the Women's Educational and Industrial Union, still doing a worthy work in Rochester.

She was one of the founders of the Women's Council, which lives today as the Federation of Women's Clubs. One of this group's first acts was to fight for and win a place on the City School Board for a woman, Mrs. Helen Barrett Montgomery. Since then there has always been at least one woman school commissioner in Rochester.

When Clara Barton came to Rochester from Dansville in 1881 to found the second chapter of the Red Cross in America, the first woman to pledge her aid to the new agency of mercy was Susan Brownell Anthony.

\* \* \*

Nearly 43 years have gone by since that blizzardy March day when the City Hall bell tolled and all the flags were at half mast and 10,000 people stood in the cold outside Central Church and Susan B. Anthony rode for the last time through the streets of her city — to sleep under the snows of Mount Hope.

Her fame grew in death. Her successors invoked her name to win the last great battle for the cause. Then came the flood of memorials, the eulogies, the streets and schools named in her honor, the preservation of her old home as a shrine, and finally the cold marble figure in the Hall of Fame.

And all but forgotten now is that other Susan, young blue-eyed Susan in a Quaker bonnet, the school teacher who was the belle of Canajoharie in her radiant youth.

## *Buffalo Bill*

**F**EBRUARY 26 is a state holiday in Wyoming.

It's the birthday of Col. William Frederick Cody, known to thousands as Buffalo Bill, the Superman of his time, Indian fighter, buffalo hunter, Army scout and showman.

In Rochester the anniversary passes without any special recognition. Yet this city had its part in the colorful career of Buffalo Bill. He made his home here at least two years. Three of his children are buried in Mount Hope Cemetery. And nearly every season during the 90's and the early 1900's, he brought the tinsel splendor of his Wild West shows here.

The Codys came to Rochester in 1874 and lived for a time at 434 Exchange St. They also resided for short periods at the Waverly (now the Savoy) Hotel in State Street, in that day a fashionable hostelry. No. 10 New York Street also was the home of the man who personified the glamour of the old West.

He was tall and ox-shouldered and straight as a forest pine. He carried his head proudly and his heels clicked on the stone walk. He was barely 30 and despite his bulk, moved with catlike grace. His black hair was long and curly and a well tended mustache and goatee enhanced the regal bearing. He wore a wide brimmed hat and a black coat with tails. His boots shone like burnished brass. A massive gold watch chain was slung across his midriff. He smoked a cigar—not furtively like a ward heeler nor clumsily like a farmer at the fair, but with an air, like a Southern grandee.

When Bill Cody took up his abode in Rochester, he was only on the threshold of his career as a showman. But he already was a romantic, almost fabulous figure in the winning of the West.

His career was a spectacular one. He killed his first Indian when he was 11 years old. When he was a mere boy, his father, a staunch abolitionist, died from wounds suffered in a pre-war skirmish over slavery in bleeding Kansas. The son became a "jayhawker," a guerrilla fighter, preying on "slaves" until his mother importuned him to join the regular Union Army. He served with distinction in the Civil War. In 1865, a dashing figure in his blue captain's uniform, he wooed and won Louise Frederici, in St. Louis' old Frenchtown.

Cody became in turn, a courier between wagon trains, a wagon master, a hunter, a trapper, a pony express rider, a stage coach driver, a Cavalry Scout in Indian campaigns. He won his sobriquet of Buffalo Bill when he contracted to furnish buffalo meat for the men building the Kansas Pacific Railroad and slaughtered 4,280 of the beasts in 18 months.

Buffalo hunts became popular and he guided Eastern millionaires on such expeditions. He played host to a royal hunter, the Grand Duke Alexis of Russia. It was then he met Prof. Henry A. Ward of Rochester, who was more interested in obtaining specimens for his Natural Science Museum here than in the thrills of the chase.

In the meantime Elmo Judson, writing under the nom de plume of Ned Buntline, had made the name of Buffalo Bill famous. He authored hundreds of fantastic tales, encased in paper wrappers, in which the colonel was the hero. The Buffalo Bill vogue took hold, especially in the East and wealthy friends induced Cody to try a stage career.

So in 1872 the scout turned his back on the plains and became a showman. Mrs. Cody in her memoirs tells how Judson, in four hours of frenzied writing in a Chicago hotel, turned out the script of "Scouts of the Plains," the first melodrama in which

Cody appeared. Judson had hired the hall and the cast before the play was even written.

In that cast were such picturesque Westerners as Cody's pal, Texas Jack; Kit Carson, Jr., and later on, the redoubtable Wild Bill Hickok. The show was without sequence or plot, the acting was amateurish, but it contained lots of shooting and thrills and the Chicago crowds liked it.

When the show came east, Cody decided the nomadic trouper life was not the thing for a mother and three small children. So around 1874 he settled his brood in Rochester, in the Exchange Street house. He made his home here although he was on the road much of the time. Judson had dashed off more melodramas and the show had been enlivened by the addition of some real Indians.

Rochester probably has never seen more picturesque days than those when the Cody show played in the old Grand Opera House, now the Embassy, in '75.

What a colorful band it was; the handsome Cody, Texas Jack, Wild Bill Hickok, who was a flop as an actor; young Carson and the Indians, among them a Sioux chief named Yellow Hand.

By that time the Codys had moved to New York Street. Mrs. Cody is remembered as a tall, serious woman. Arta, the oldest daughter, was then 9; Kit Carson, his chum, was 5 and the baby, Orra, was only 3.

Buffalo Bill was an indulgent parent. Young Kit, his only son, was the apple of his eye. The colonel taught Kit to shoot at targets in the back yard, despite his tender years.

The two older Cody children had parts in the play, "Life on the Plains." They were dressed as young Indians. It is recalled that Yellow Hand once appeared at curtain time roaring

drunk, and that Cody knocked the Indian down, back stage. Later on, a story came out of the West that Buffalo Bill had killed Yellow Hand in the Sioux campaign of the late 1870's.

The Indians presented an incongruous picture on Rochester's staid streets. For although they condescended to wear white shirts they refused to tuck the tails in their buckskin breeches, but wore them outside.

Those were pleasant days in New York Street. There was no hint then of the rift that developed later between Mrs. Cody and the big man she always called "Will." Hicks and Arta and Kit went to No. 2 School in King Street, presided over by Miss Mary S. Anthony, sister of the famous Susan B.

But sad days were in the offing. In April, 1876, Arta and Kit were stricken with scarlet fever. The girl's case was mild but the lad grew desperately ill. Cody was in Boston with his show. Frantically his wife wired him to rush home. Kit was dying. The big man in the soft hat came tearing into the house just before Kit breathed his last. When they buried his only son in Mount Hope, something went out of Buffalo Bill's life forever. He was never exactly the same after that.

The life of the stage palled on him. He heard the West calling and rejoined the Army as chief of Scouts in the campaign against the Sioux. He gave up the home in Rochester and the family went back to Nebraska, all but Arta, who remained for a year or so as a student in Livingston Park Seminary, in the old Third Ward.

\* \* \*

After that Rochester saw the frontiersman only occasionally. His Wild West Show became a vast success and played to throngs in Madison Square Garden and made a tour abroad.

He collected a galaxy of hard riding cowboys and Indians, including the redoubtable Sitting Bull.

In 1883 the colonel and his wife came back on a sad mission, to bury 11-year-old Orra beside her brother, Kit, on the hillside at Mount Hope.

Buffalo Bill's circus came to town often and always played to packed tents. A press agent conceived the idea of having the colonel photographed placing wreaths on the graves of his children. His old cronies, with whom Buffalo Bill gathered at Lafe Heidel's place on Water Street, knew it rankled the old showman but he sensed the value of "heart throb" publicity and kept silent.

For 14 years Mrs. Cody and her "Will" were estranged. They were reconciled in Rochester in 1914 when the show played on the Bay Street ball lot.

Writers of paper-backed "thrillers" and press agents glorified Buffalo Bill almost out of all semblance to mortal man. He was no paragon. He was a vital figure of earth, the product of his environment and his time. His faults were the obvious ones. They were the errors of the warm blooded and the impulsive, never the sins of the cold and calculating.

In 1904 he and Mrs. Cody came back here, again on a sorrowful mission. Arta had died at the age of 38, three weeks after her marriage to Dr. Charles Thorpe, an army surgeon. Tragedy seemed to stalk the Cody children. Now there were three headstones in the family plot in Mount Hope. There is a tale, probably apocryphal, that on the whole long journey from Nebraska the colonel and his wife did not say a word to each other.

Buffalo Bill's children were all dead but he had adopted a young fellow named Johnny Baker. A great bond of affection

linked the two men. Baker joined the show, became a star marksman and eventually manager of the circus. Whenever he visited Rochester, he made his way to the cemetery to strew flowers on the Cody graves. After he died in 1931, his widow brought Johnny Baker's ashes from the West, to be committed to the earth of Mount Hope.

Death came to William F. Cody in Denver in 1917. He was 71. He had fame and riches. He had seen his Old West of the plains transformed. President Wilson, royalty, generals, stage stars sent messages of condolence. His body lay in state under the great dome of Colorado's capitol, before he was laid to rest in a tomb hewn out of the rock of Lookout Mountain. His wife was buried beside him in 1922. A Buffalo Bill museum perpetuates his memory at Cody, Wyoming.

\* \* \*

The three headstones in Mount Hope link forever the name of Buffalo Bill with this city that he once called home.

But also there are memories that endure in the hearts of men and women no longer young.

Again they stand with the crowds that jam the curb along Main Street. They crane their necks, watching for the big parade. From the distance come the first strains of martial music. Then the thud of hoofbeats on cobblestones, louder and louder until—

The glory of the Old West rides before them, Indians in full panoply of paint and feathers, gaudy-shirted cowboys with lariats and spurs, on spotted ponies.

And at the head of this glittering company, rides a superb figure, a bearded man on horseback, waving a big white hat.

The crowd stirs like a field of wheat flicked by a sudden breeze. The awed voices pass along the word:

"There he is. That's him. That's Buffalo Bill."

## *“Novel Factory”*

HE had the largest following for the longest period of any American author.

More than two million copies of her books were sold.

Over a span of 51 years, she wrote 38 full length novels and hundreds of magazine articles.

And most of them were written in an old fashioned brown house in Brockport. A remarkable woman was Mary Jane Holmes.

The name means nothing to you? Then there's no gray in your hair.

But if you are old enough to remember when every home had a parlor, you also will remember that no parlor bookshelf was complete without *Lena Rivers*, *English Orphans*, *The Homestead on the Hillside*, *Tempest and Sunshine* and the other ultra-sentimental yet immensely popular love stories of Mary Jane Holmes.

If you lived in Brockport before 1907, you may remember the thin stately lady who wore a wig, and was so dignified; whose name was a household word in America; the well groomed, widely traveled lady who lived in her beloved "Brown Cottage" in College Street with her frail wisp of a lawyer husband, Daniel Holmes. She came to live in the pleasant village on the banks of the Erie Canal, a young bride in 1853 and called Brockport her home until her death there on October 6, 1907.

The name Mary Jane Holmes meant a lot to your grandmothers wherever they chanced to live. On remote hilltop farms, toil-stained fingers eagerly reached for *Lena Rivers* at

close of day; well-thumbed copies of *Cousin Maude* passed from hand to hand over picket fences in sleepy villages; in the rococo splendor of gaslit city parlors, fashionable ladies mooned over the tribulations of Marion Gray; even in one-room prairie shanties and in the lantern light of covered wagons, tired eyes sparkled over the romantic world that the Lady from Brockport painted for them—and for a few minutes forgot the toil and the travail that was part of the winning of the West.

It was so all through the long Victorian Age of which Mary Jane Holmes and her novels were symbols.

Today her books are on library shelves, not for lending purposes but as exhibits of Nineteenth Century Americana.

\* \* \*

The author was born Mary Jane Hawes in Brookfield, Massachusetts, on April 5, 1828. A sensitive, imaginative, precocious child, she began attending the district school at the age of three. At an early age she informed her schoolmates that "one day I will write a book that you all will read."

One of her shorter stories, *Rice Corners*, presents a revealing picture of the writer's girlhood. She wrote of "the old brown house on her father's farm," of "the large airy garret where she and the other children played on rainy days," of the woods and the mill dam and the abandoned mine that all the youngsters shunned, of coasting on snow-clad hills.

She told, too, of "the flat rock on the hillside in the shadow of the grapevine where I would gaze far off into the distant, misty horizon; how wild fancies filled my childish brain, strange voices whispered to me thoughts and ideas, which if written down and carried out, would have placed my name higher than it was carved on the old chestnut tree."

"I was a strange girl," she wrote in *Rice Corners*, "When

forgetful of others, I talked aloud to my band of little folks, unseen 'tis true, but still real to me, the wise villagers shook their gray heads ominously and whispered to my mother: 'Mark my word, that girl will be in a madhouse in ten years.' "

Less than ten years found Mary Jane teaching school in Western New York. When only 13 she had taught a term in the district school near her New England home. Then at 15 she made a long trip to visit the family of her uncle, Col. Lyman Hawes, who lived at Allen's Hill in Ontario County. He had left his native Bay State, a boy of 16, for the Genesee frontier, had worked on farms, soldiered and eventually became a prosperous farmer in the new community.

For four years the girl taught in the old schoolhouse on Allen's Hill near the Episcopal Church. In 1849 she married Daniel Holmes, a scholarly young lawyer who had yet to hang out his shingle. All his life Holmes, beset by ill health, was overshadowed by the more vigorous personality of his famous wife.

The young couple lived for a time in Versailles, Kentucky, where Holmes opened a law office. The next year found them back at Allen's Hill and Mary Jane again teaching school. Two years later they moved to Canandaigua where the husband taught in the old Academy and practiced law on the side. In 1853 they moved to Brockport, there to reside the rest of their lives.

\* \* \*

Mary Jane Holmes had never for a moment forgotten her early ambition to write. After settling in Brockport, she began her literary career in earnest.

Her first novel, *Tempest and Sunshine*, a story of Southern society, based on her brief residence in Kentucky, came out in

1854. It was a success. The next year she produced English Orphans, a real tear jerker, and her fame was established. She had been doing some magazine stories and now her novels began to appear in serial form in New York publications. Her Marion Gray, written in 1860, is credited with having saved the New York Weekly from bankruptcy.

The Holmes books enjoyed an immediate vogue. And her earlier works were the ones to achieve the most lasting popularity although she kept writing up to the time of her death and left a half finished novel.

Mrs. Holmes was a prolific writer, turning out one, sometimes two, novels a year during the early days of her career. Here is the record of her 51-year output and the titles will stir many a memory for a generation no longer young:

Tempest and Sunshine, 1854; English Orphans and Homestead on the Hillside, 1855; Lena Rivers, 1856; Meadowbrook, 1857; Dora Deane, 1858; Cousin Maude, Rosamond and Marion Gray (three in one year) 1860; Darkness and Daylight, 1861; Hugh Worthington, 1863; Cameron Pride, 1867; Rose Mather, 1868; Ethelyn's Mistake, 1869; Millbank, 1871; Edna Brown, 1872; West Lawn, 1874; The Rector of St. Mark's, 1874; Edith Lyle, 1875; Mildred, 1876; Daisy Thornton, 1877; Forest House, 1878; Chateau D'Or, 1880; Madeline, 1881; Queenie Heatherton, 1883; Christmas Stories, 1884; Bessie's Fortune, 1885; Gretchen, 1886; Marguerite, 1889; Dr. Hathern's Daughter, 1890; Mrs. Hallan's Companion, 1893; Paul Ralston, 1899; Melville Banks, 1901; The Tracy Diamonds, 1903; The Cromptons and Rene's Experiment, 1904; The Abandoned Farm and Connie's Mistake, 1905.

Mrs. Holmes amassed a comfortable fortune from her work, averaging about \$6,000 per novel. It has been said that

among women writers, only the books of Harriet Beecher Stowe had wider circulation and paid larger royalties. Mrs. Stowe's success was based largely on one best seller, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

Brockport's most famous resident became a globe trotter. She visited in her lifetime every state in the Union, Canada, Alaska, Europe, Asia and Africa. She lived four years in Europe, spending her winters in Sweden and Norway and summers in France and in the Holy Land. A deeply religious woman, she studied Biblical lore in Palestine. Everywhere she gathered material for the steady stream of novels that poured from her pen.

Her home in Brockport became filled with curios and souvenirs of her travels. It was enlarged until it could no longer be truly called a cottage but Mrs. Holmes persisted in using the romantic title. In a "den" in the old house in College Street she did most of her writing, a laborious job in longhand.

The novelist always took a lively interest in the community and old timers recall her as a grand dame in white ermine coat and expensive jewelry—but never too much of it—at Brockport social affairs.

Early in her literary career she vowed to give a tenth of her income to religious and charitable works and she exceeded her pledge. She established a free reading room in the village; helped build St. Luke's parish house; educated two Japanese girls she met in her travels; supported a dozen needy families in the village, leaving funds with her rector to carry on her charities while she was on her world tours. She was president of the church guild, head of the Union Benevolent Society, active in the Women's Christian Temperance Union, a regent of the Daughters of the American Revolution. She lectured before cultural groups in Rochester and other places. There

never was any scandal in Mary Jane Holmes' private life. She was, like her books, ever eminently respectable and proper.

The childless woman was fond of youngsters and dedicated one of her books, *The Red Birds' Christmas Story*, to the boys and girls that played around the Brown Cottage. It is a sweet little tale of a garden, the birds, a cat and a dog, and the boys and girls of her neighborhood. In its preface the author wrote that "the children are real live children—Florence and Johnnie and Maggie and May and Louise and Sophie and Giffie and Harry." Maybe some Brockporters will recognize these names as familiar ones.

But despite her long residence in Western New York, Mrs. Holmes placed the scenes of nearly all her novels in New England or the South, occasionally in Europe. There was frequent mention of fashionable Saratoga and of Madison Square in New York City, which the author apparently regarded as the acme of magnificence. But there was little of the Genesee Country to which she came as a young girl and which she knew so well.

An exception is found in her novel, *Cousin Maude or the Milkman's Heiress*. The heroine, a young girl, leaves her New England home, to be met at the depot in Canandaigua by a farm carryall that takes her over rough roads to Laurel Hill, "from whose rocky hillsides she can see the sparkling waters of Honeoye." Doubtless the author was harking back to a day when another young girl named Mary Jane Hawes made the long journey from New England to teach school at wind-swept Allen's Hill near "the sparkling waters of Honeoye." The book also contained a reference to "Aunt Kelsey who lives in Rochester in a grand house."

\* \* \*

Mrs. Holmes was an exponent of direct action. When the crowing of roosters in the neighborhood annoyed her while she was at work, she did not remonstrate with the owners. She bought every rooster on the street.

In 1907 the writer became ill while on a visit to her girlhood home. She was 79 but her indomitable will carried her back to Brockport to die in the Brown Cottage.

Her funeral on October 9 was the largest in the village's history. When the body of America's most popular novelist lay in state in the Episcopal Church where she had worshipped for so many years, nearly 1,000 persons passed the flower-banked bier. Some of them were distinguished people from the big cities but most of them were plain folks, her neighbors, many of them recipients of her bounty; others who as children had learned the kindness that lay back of the somewhat austere exterior of the lady who lived in the Brown Cottage and fed them cookies.

Daniel Holmes, the semi-invalid lawyer, lived on in the home for 12 lonely years before he was laid to rest beside his famous wife. Brockport remembers him as a slight figure, weighing only 80 pounds and clinging to the tall hat and cut-away coat of his profession. Subject to attacks of malaria, he was so frail that sometimes he had to be carried up two flights of stairs to his office.

When the estate was settled after his death, the author's jewelry was sold and according to her wishes, the proceeds were divided among three Rochester charities; The Orphan Asylum, the Industrial School and the Episcopal Church Home.

\* \* \*

Mrs. Holmes' writings would not be popular today. There were no subtleties, no shadings in her characters, nor was there

any stark realism. Everything ran to a conventional pattern. Her New Englanders were diamonds in the rough who spoke an exaggerated Down East dialect. Her Southerners were of the hare and hounds, pistols at dawn, planter type. Her heroes were paragons of virtue. Her villains were soulless curs. Her heroines, nearly all of whom survived long sieges of "brain fever," were just too sweet and lovely for this world. And there was always the happy ending.

Here is a sample of the Holmes style from Lena Rivers, the best seller of all her works, the story that has been dramatized for thousands of "home talent" stages all over the land and that eventually became a movie:

"It was midnight at Maple Grove. On the table in its accustomed place, the lamp was burning dimly, casting the shadow upon the wall, whilst over the whole room a darker shadow was brooding. The window was open and the cool night air came softly in, lifting the masses of raven hair from off the pale brow of the dying. Tenderly above her, Nellie and Lena were bending. They had watched by her many a night and now she was asking them not to leave her, not to disturb a single one—she would rather die alone.

"The sound of horses' hoofs rang out on the still air but she did not heed. Nearer and nearer it came, over the lawn, up the graveled walk, through the yard and Nellie's face blanched as she thought who that midnight rider was . . . On through the wide hall and the broad staircase he came, until he stood in the chamber, where before him another guest had entered, whose name was Death!

"Face to face John Livingstone stood with Nellie Douglass, and between them lay his wife—her rival—the white hands

folded meekly upon her bosom and the pale lips just as they breathed a prayer for him."

"'Mabel, she is dead' was all he uttered and falling upon his knees he buried his face in the pillow . . ."

Of course it all added up to "Mabel was dead when her husband arrived at Maple Grove."

But your grandma — and mine — liked Mrs. Holmes' style better.

Once when a religious friend asked the novelist why she always wove the love theme so tightly into her stories, Mrs. Holmes replied:

"I write what people want."

In the long Victorian age they wanted sentimental slush, faultless heroes, monstrous villains, pure-hearted heroines and the happy ending.

But when Mary Jane Holmes died in the year of 1907, the Victorian Age was rapidly passing from America. Horses and buggies that had rattled over covered bridges were giving way to noisy, smelling automobiles; family prayers and the singing school were yielding to the age of jazz and movies.

In that new age Mary Jane Holmes, a strait-laced Christian lady who wrote sweet unrealities in a quiet Western New York canal town, could have no part.

## *The Man Who Stole a Train*

**H**E WAS Western New York's Billy the Kid.

The James boys and the Daltons hunted in packs. But Oliver Curtis Perry, specialist in train robbery, played a lone, bold hand always.

Like Billy, the bad boy of the western plains, he did not look the part. He might have passed for a village schoolmaster or a corner apothecary who taught a Bible class on Sundays. His voice was soft and his manners were almost effeminate. His brown eyes, that blazed in fury when he was trapped, could also be disarmingly gentle and seemingly without guile. His slender, supple figure was always clad in sober black and the slim, white fingers that held so much criminal cunning were usually encased in gloves.

But for all of that impeccable exterior, he was the most audacious, spectacular bandit these parts ever knew.

Many are still alive who will remember him. It was nearly 57 years ago that he staged the exploit that startled the nation.

Oliver Curtis Perry will live in criminal annals as the man, who, fleeing from a thwarted train robbery, stole an engine and from its cab fought a running gun duel with the crew of a locomotive that pursued on another track.

The dawn that broke over the frozen Wayne County flats on the morning of February 22, 1892, unfolded a strange spectacle—two engines racing, alternately straightaway on parallel tracks, then reversing their paths in the chase, all to the staccato accompaniment of gunfire.

Of course, they caught Oliver Curtis Perry, eventually, but not in his stolen engine. And his later career in prison was every bit as fantastic as had been his days of freedom when he

was Upstate's Billy the Kid. But that is peeking at the back pages and will not do.

\* \* \*

Emil Laas was one Rochesterian who had good cause to remember the train robber. Laas was, up to his death two years ago, the only survivor of the train crew that had such a thrilling encounter with Perry back in '92.

In 1892 Emil Laas was the youngest conductor on the division and he walked in the winter dusk with a jaunty step as he checked No. 31, a ten-car, all-express train, before it left the New York Central station in Syracuse.

On the platform he noticed a young man with glasses and a sandy mustache, a bag slung over his shoulder. Something about the young man rang a warning bell in Laas' mind and he cautioned his trainman against allowing any one near the express cars.

For No. 31 was hauling a rich cargo. Just ahead of the day coach, where the conductor and trainman rode at the rear of the train, was the money car where young Daniel T. McInerney of Rochester, the messenger, guarded more than a quarter million dollars.

At Jordan, a few miles out of Syracuse, the conductor heard a hissing sound. He went to the money car and peered through the cord hole. A flickering light caused him to believe the car was on fire. Then he saw a stranger pawing over envelopes. Laas yanked the emergency cord. He hopped back into the coach and slammed on the emergency brakes. Before the train ground to a full stop, from the side door of the money car a gun barked twice and a low voice, that was full of deadly menace spoke:

"Get this train to running again or I will blow you all to pieces."

Oliver Curtis Perry, the soft spoken bandit, had taken over Express Train 31.

Facing two revolvers, Laas had no recourse but to signal the train to start. He slid back into the coach, armed himself with a wrench and waited. At Port Byron came the break he sought. As the express train thundered into the station, a fast freight stood waiting on another track. Some of its crew were on the platform.

Laas leaped for the emergency brake and pulled with all his strength. Slowly the long train came to a halt. The crew rushed to the money car. There they found the messenger, semi-conscious with three bullet wounds in his body. Envelopes and papers were strewn over the floor but the treasure was intact. There was no bandit in sight. The crew searched the train and concluded that he had fled in the darkness when the train stopped. Laas ordered the train to speed to Lyons, after he had sent a message ahead, telling of McInerney's injuries.

In the meantime a thrilling duel of guns and wits had been enacted in that darkened money car.

The slim youth with the glasses and the bag over his shoulder had concealed himself between two cars when the train pulled out of Syracuse. Then he perched atop the money car in the cold until the train reached Jordan.

Out of his bag he took an ingeniously devised rope ladder, with hooks that fitted over the side of the cornice of the car. Carefully he lowered himself to the window. With his revolver butt he smashed the pane.

Dan McInerney was sitting in front of a safe, sorting packages by the light of a kerosene lamp when the crash of glass startled him. He saw a man's head, hidden all save the eyes, by a red flannel mask, framed in the broken window. The

messenger reached for his gun. He and the bandit fired almost simultaneously. Perry's bullet hit McInerney in the hand. The messenger tried to pull the emergency cord. Perry fired again and hit McInerney just over his left eyebrow. Game to the core, the messenger, before he sank to the floor, kicked the chimney off the lamp, plunging the car into darkness. Then Perry reached in and unloosening the catch, let himself into the car.

For a time the express man was unconscious. The cool breeze coming through the broken window revived him. He pulled the emergency rope, feebly. That was the hissing sound Laas had heard. The bandit then touched a match to some waybills. That was the flickering light Laas had seen.

After the messenger continued to pull the rope, Perry fired again, just as McInerney rose to grapple with him. A wound in the thigh sent the messenger to the floor again. He contrived to sit on a pile of valuable packages and on orders from Perry, opened some envelopes. Purposely he picked only those that contained valueless papers.

It was then the train was stopped and Perry forced the crew to proceed. At Port Byron he apparently got off, during the search for him, then swung back on as the train resumed its course. Before he left the money car he bade the wounded messenger a polite "good bye."

\* \* \*

At Lyons where word had been received of the holdup and wounding of the messenger, a crowd had gathered despite the early hour.

Willing hands lifted the wounded McInerney from the treasure car he had defended so gallantly and bore him to a doctor. Laas hurried into the Lyons station to file a report and



*Joseph Smith (upper left), Mormon Monument, Margaret Fox (above) and her sister, Katy, and onetime Shaker Manor House at Sodus Bay.*



*John L. Sullivan Who Once Trained in the Genesee Valley.*

spread the alarm. On returning to the train, he saw coolly mingling in the crowd the same young man he had spotted on the platform in Syracuse. He told the brakeman to "keep an eye on that fellow" while he went in search of a policeman.

But the brakeman could not wait. He and another railroader made a grab for the sandy youth with the glasses. Pronto they looked into the muzzles of two revolvers.

Perry dashed to the locomotive and tried to detach it from the express train. The automatic coupler balked him. Then he ran across two tracks and pulled the pin from the coupling of a freight engine. Waving his guns, he drove the engineer and firemen from the cab. He climbed in and opened wide the throttle.

As Perry started the engine, someone in the crowd produced a shotgun. Armed with this weapon, railroad men uncoupled the express locomotive, manned the cab and sped down the tracks in pursuit.

When Perry saw the faster engine bearing down upon him on a parallel track, he threw his steed into reverse. As the pursuers flashed by, both he and the railroaders blazed away at each other. The forces of law and order reversed and again caught up with the bandit. They fired and then dropped flat on their stomachs as Perry's fire raked their cab. During the chase, the bandit blew the whistle at each crossing, as if his engine was on a routine run.

Several times this maneuver was repeated. The bandit seemed to have plenty of ammunition and he knew how to manipulate a railroad engine. Finally the posse decided to give up the chase and went back to Lyons for reinforcements.

They did not realize that because of the untended fires in the stolen engine that its steam was running low. Perry saw

that he must abandon the vehicle of flight that had stood him in such good stead.

At the "Blue Cut" the robber climbed down from the cab and with his guns, "persuaded" a switchman he found there to run the engine back to Lyons.

When he saw it disappear down the tracks, Perry started off across the fields on foot, seeking new means of escape. As long as his ammunition held out, he knew he would have little trouble obtaining them.

He went to a farmhouse, demanded a horse and obtained it, telling the farmer he was a Pinkerton detective on the trail of a train robber. Any doubts the farmer might have had held melted away before the sight of Perry's shooting irons, one in each gloved hand.

After five miles, the mount, no saddle horse, but a plodding animal used to pulling a plow, tired and Perry decided to switch horses. He stopped at another house, where a farmer was just hitching a horse to a cutter. He repeated his story of being a Pinkerton man in need of transportation to catch a robber. When the farmer demurred, a shot fired in the air changed his mind and Perry drove out of the barn-yard in a horse-drawn cutter with sleighbells jangling.

By mistake he got off the main road and on a logging trail in the town of Arcadia. The road ended in a swamp. Perry decided that would be as good a hideout as any. He knew the countryside would be mobilizing.

The farm owner had piled some stones at the edge of this swamp. The bandit found more and added to the heap until he had a "fort" about a foot and a half high.

Behind this flimsy redoubt, Oliver Curtis Perry crouched in the snow and waited the course of events.

He had not long to wait.

\* \* \*

For as word of the holdup spread, a manhunt was organized with Wayne County Sheriff Thornton in command of a posse of 30 men. One group of five was led by Jeremiah Collins, then a young deputy. That group set out in a horse-drawn cutter and came upon the bandit's trail near Benton's Swamp in the Town of Arcadia.

The boldness and cunning of the crime led Collins to believe the man they were trailing was the notorious Oliver Curtis Perry and he was prepared for a fight to the finish with a resourceful criminal.

The Collins detachment wallowed through the snow around Benton's Swamp until they came to a low stone wall. Collins was in the lead when he heard a shout from the rear:

"Look out, Jerry, he's going to shoot."

From behind the snow pile a man had risen. His right hand clutched a revolver. "Did I kill that messenger?" he demanded.

Informed that McInerney was alive, the fugitive seemed relieved and began parleying with Collins. First he stipulated that the deputy face him unarmed. Collins replied that he had no gun. He told the bandit he might as well give up; that the odds against him were hopeless.

For several minutes they talked. Jerry Collins was stalling for time. Some of his men had started to steal around to the robber's rear. The hunted man saw the movement and his glance shifted for a second from Collins' face.

Quick as light, the deputy was upon him, grabbing the

bandit around the waist in a flying tackle before Perry could use his gun. Down in the snow went the pair in a struggling heap. The posse closed in and Oliver Curtis Perry was a prisoner.

He made no attempt to deny his identity. He had left his red mask and rope ladder in the cab of the stolen engine but he still had three guns and ten cartridges.

\* \* \*

The desperado that the posse led back to the Lyons jail was only 27 but he had packed a lot of crime into that short span of years.

He was a native of Fulton County and came from pioneer Anglo-Saxon stock. At the time of Oliver's capture his father was a hard working carpenter in Syracuse.

When the boy was 14, he was sent to a state reformatory for burglary. Three years later he repeated the offense and became an inmate of the old red brick Monroe County Penitentiary. There he distinguished himself by attacking a guard in a vain attempt at escape.

Then he went to Minnesota to live with an uncle. Promptly he robbed his uncle's store, was caught and went to Stillwater Prison for three years. On his release he became a cowboy in Montana. There on the range he learned to draw fast and shoot straight. Returning East, he worked for a time in railroad shops at Albany. It was then that he learned how to run a locomotive.

In the meantime he raised money occasionally by imposing upon religious people. He was suave and glib and obtained funds to "start all over again" by telling credulous folk he had reformed.

But in train robbery he found his real forte.

\* \* \*

In the Lyons jail Perry was kept under the strictest guard. His trial in May drew crowds from all over Western New York. Supreme Court Justice William Rumsey, magnificent in lambrequin whiskers, presided. The prosecutor was S. Nelson Sawyer of Palmyra, who later became a Supreme Court Justice.

The trial was short. Perry pleaded guilty to all four counts of the indictment, stipulating that the \$300 cash found on him and his private arsenal not be confiscated. Justice Rumsey "threw the book" at the train robber. The sentence was 49 years and 3 months in state prison.

In the Court House Perry came face to face with Dan McInerney for the first time since their duel in the money car. Perry smiled and said: "McInerney, you are a brave man. I am sorry I had to shoot you."

When Perry was being taken in irons from the Lyons jail to the train that was to bear him to Auburn Prison, 2,000 people milled about him. For once the bandit lost his insouciance and snarled at them:

"What do you think I am, some kind of a wild beast? Why in hell do you crowd around me so I can't breathe?"

That afternoon old Copper John from his lofty perch above the grim, gray prison watched the gates clang shut behind a newcomer to his walled domain.

Oliver Curtis Perry was shut away from the outer world. But that world had not heard the last of him.

His erratic conduct at Auburn caused him to be adjudged insane and in 1905 he was transferred to Matteawan. He had not been there long before he escaped, with three other prisoners. They had made a key out of a spoon that had been smuggled into them, overpowered a guard and fled over a rooftop. All were recaptured. Perry was caught in the railroad

yards at Weehawken, N. J. He seemingly could not keep away from trains.

Soon after his return to Matteawan Perry made the news again — with a horrifying deed. He blinded himself for life in his cell by dropping hot needle points into his eyes.

Later he was shipped to Dannemora, the North County "Siberia" of state prisons, and there his behavior was sensational indeed. He went on a hunger strike and was forcibly fed for four years. He appealed to prison authorities for better food, "not only for myself but for all the prisoners." He tore his prison suit to shreds, ripped his shoes to pieces and refused to wear a stitch of outer clothing until he was furnished "a suit of respectable cut."

Reporters from the metropolitan newspapers interviewed him in his cell. They found him in the pink of health despite his fasting. He was a strange personality, this blind man with a white bandage over his eyes, lying on his cot, a blanket his only raiment.

Perry expressed regret that he had blinded himself, saying he did it while under the influence of opium that had been smuggled into him and which deadened the pain. He said his family had disowned him and that he hoped his act would bring them to his aid. But they paid no attention to him although some clergymen and reformers became interested in his case.

He declared he robbed trains only "to get money to go out West and start life over again." Perry said the reports that he was led astray as a boy by reading dime novels was untrue. "I read *Golden Days* and the *Fireside Companion*, neither of which would fire anybody's imagination," he said.

In 1917 he dictated a long and moving appeal to Governor Whitman, asking for commutation of sentence. In it he pointed

out that he had never murdered anyone, that he never associated with criminals in the outer world and that he had already served 25 years of a long sentence.

His plea wound up with this statement: "My simple prayer is that my sentence be reduced. Otherwise I will have to live among maniacs for 24 more long dreary years. I pray that the Honorable Governor may lighten my blinded life a little."

This document was taken down by a prison attendant just as Perry dictated it, even to punctuation marks.

But the "Honorable Governor" could do nothing about it, had he so chosen, for the doctors had pronounced Oliver Curtis Perry incurably insane.

He was 65 when death came to him in the darkness of Dannemora's madhouse. Thirty-seven of his years had been spent in prison, 25 of them in a self induced world of shadows.

He had paid dearly for his few hours of glamor.

His proudest boast had been "Nobody ever robbed a train just the way I did."

And nobody ever has since.

## *Hermit's Gold*

THE Hermit of Hermitage couldn't take it with him. When, 43 years ago, James L. Blodgett perished in the flaming ruins of his lonely dwelling, he had to leave behind his hoard of gold pieces, his farms, his mortgages and the other worldly accumulations that had made him the richest man in all Wyoming County.

But he left another sort of legacy—a wealth of stories and legends about his fantastic way of life that men still repeat out in the hills and vales around Warsaw. He has become part of the folklore of Western New York.

For no countryside ever knew a more eccentric or paradoxical character.

James Blodgett was popularly reputed a millionaire. Certainly his fortune ran into six figures.

Yet he lived as simply as any lone prospector in Death Valley. He cooked his own meals, made his own woolen shirts, washed his clothes and his dishes, too, in the stream that purred by his kitchen door. He dressed like a penniless farm hand, in patched overalls, soiled denim jumper, greasy, broad-brimmed, black felt hat and, rain or shine, rubber boots.

He was a banker and handled large sums of money. He owned many farms, held mortgages on many more, besides possessing considerable real estate in Rochester and Buffalo.

Yet he once lugged a sack of flour on his back a quarter of a mile to a farmer's house on a stormy winter's night to earn a dime, and another time, he trundled a villager in a wheelbarrow three miles to pocket half a dollar.

He was a graduate of Yale, with high honors. He taught mathematics for a time at his Alma Mater. He was versed in

the law, in civil engineering, was a skilled surveyor, knew his history and theology. And he owned a fine library.

Despite that cultural background, this wealthy bachelor, the largest taxpayer in the town of Wethersfield, was a foe of the public schools and complained that "other people produce the children and I have to pay for their education." Because he chose to visit his farms on foot, often striding crosslots, through woods and swamps, wading streams, he resented having to pay for the upkeep of highways that "other people used." He would "work out" his road tax rather than pay cash. He performed the hardest manual labor, chopped and hauled his own wood, shingled his buildings, dug his ditches, mended his fences.

When in his youth the only romance of his life was grounded on the bitter shoals of disillusionment, he left unfinished and untouched for the rest of his lifetime the mansion he had been building for his affianced. After that no woman save his mother was ever known to cross his threshold.

Four times he was the victim of robbers, lured to little Hermitage by tales of the banker's ill guarded treasure and his solitary habits. Twice the bandits beat him, when he was an old man.

\* \* \*

He came of pioneer stock. His father, Lewis Blodgett, settled in Hermitage, south of Warsaw, in 1812. Blodgett pere, a New Englander, possessed the acquisitive instinct and amassed considerable property, including saw and grist mills, a tannery and farms. James' mother, Betsy Cravath, also was wealthy in her own right.

So the boy who was born in Hermitage in 1822 had unusual advantages for the times. A strapping six footer of 25, he

entered Yale College and graduated in three years. He was awarded the wooden spoon emblematic of the highest scholastic standing in his class. He excelled in mathematics and engineering and for a year after his graduation taught math at Yale.

Then, after a visit to Washington, he came back to his native village to help his aging father in his many enterprises. Hermitage then was a self-sustaining business center, not the somnolent, off-the-beaten path hamlet it is today.

James fell in love with a neighbor's daughter, a belle of the village. They became engaged and on a hill overlooking the town slowly rose the mansion he was building for his bride-to-be. The new house had been enclosed and painters had begun to streak its sides with white when one twilight Blodgett's fiancee and a girl friend climbed the hill to look over the place.

They did not know it but Blodgett was in the building, also on a tour of inspection. He started to greet them when he overheard from his sweetheart's lips words that warped his whole future life. As the story goes, he heard the girl say to her companion:

"I'll make his money fly after I marry him."

Blodgett confronted his fiancee and in bitter words, ended their troth then and there. The next morning he discharged every workman on the building. He never entered it again. Kegs of nails, boxes of glass, window frames stayed there untouched. For 50 years the unfinished house remained just as it had been the night of Blodgett's disillusionment.

But all the rest of his life from the window of his office he could see the abandoned mansion on the hill, the symbol of his blasted dreams. The girl of the story went West and married.

Blodgett seemed to draw within himself and devoted all

his tremendous energy to money making, becoming more eccentric and careless in his dress as the years rolled by. After his father died, he lived with his mother in the old yellow house whose living rooms were built over tannery vats. Following his mother's demise, no woman and few men ever broke his solitude there — save the armed men who came to rob him.

\* \* \*

Around 1875, when the legend of hidden Blodgett riches was spreading and while his mother was still living, three men broke into the house early one morning. They bound and gagged Blodgett in his bed. One guard stood over him, while another held a gun at the head of the aged mother and a third rifled the old wooden safe of a sum variously estimated as \$12,000 and \$20,000.

After the thieves fled, Blodgett managed to free himself and spread the alarm. A posse followed the tracks of a one-horse buggy to a wood where the getaway vehicle was abandoned. Two years later, a local "bad man" was arrested for the crime, convicted and served 12 years in Auburn prison.

After that robbery, Blodgett installed a huge "burglar proof" safe with thick doors, a steel vault and a time lock. Farmers began to leave their savings with him and he became a banker for the community. His integrity was unquestioned and his accounts were meticulously kept.

Early one day in 1899, villagers saw a light in the Blodgett bank and discovered two men working on the safe. The banker was awakened and, armed with a club, led his fellow townsmen into his office. The robbers fled out the rear door but not before Blodgett had clipped one of them with his bludgeon. He refused to pursue the yeggs beyond the village bridge. His safe and its contents were intact.

On July 4, 1904, three bandits invaded Blodgett's bedroom, beat him and escaped with the recluse's watch and \$20 in cash. They looked in vain for the gold he was thought to have secreted in the house.

On November 4, 1904, Hermitage was awakened by a mighty explosion. Three yeggs, probably a city gang, had blown the strong box to bits and cowing aroused villagers with their guns, escaped with their loot, the amount of which Blodgett would not reveal. Before wrecking his safe, they had taken the precaution to visit Blodgett's home and club the 82-year-old banker into insensibility. Thereafter Blodgett did his banking in Buffalo.

Although so often the victim of robbers, he took his losses philosophically. The Hermit of Hermitage never sought sympathy or quarter from any man.

The recluse was something of a showman. He liked to amaze unlettered country folk by working out involved mathematical problems in white chalk on the floor of his office.

He spent \$500 for the latest books on electricity, which joined the other scientific works, the biographies, the classics that filled his shelves. An agnostic who knew his Paine and Ingersoll, he could more than hold his own in any theological argument with any village dominie. He was abstemious in all his habits. None of his hard gained dollars went for grog or tobacco. It was said that his old mother had to smoke her clay pipe surreptitiously for fear of the banker's displeasure.

For years he acted as a funeral director for the community. On such occasions he would trim his straggly beard, doff his soiled work clothes for his one good suit. Thus groomed, his tall, powerful figure and erect bearing gave him a rather distinguished appearance. He'd put on his funeral suit some-

times when making a business trip to Buffalo or Rochester. More often he'd go just the way he was, in all his sartorial negligence.

On one such visit to Rochester according to an oft-told tale, Blodgett entered a smart store in a business block and began nosing around. A clerk, thinking his visitor a bum, told him to leave. Whereupon James Blodgett said with quiet dignity: "Young man, I happen to own this property."

He would overpay workmen in sudden spells of generosity. But if a solicitor for some cause approached him, the answer was a brusque refusal.

If a farmer gave Blodgett a lift on the highway, the banker would pay for food for man and beast at the next hotel and sometimes would even hand over a dollar. In a few days he might be asking that same man for an interest payment and if the amount happened to be \$23.01, the money lender would never throw off the odd penny.

Once a man came to his office, saying with assurance: "I have been on that farm 20 years now and have never made a payment on it. By the law of squatter sovereignty, the place is now mine." Blodgett went to his safe, rummaged through his papers and came back with one, saying: "It recites here that the first year you were on the farm, I had you draw me a load of wood. I put that down as a payment. The 20 years aren't up yet and I guess you'd better move."

Seldom did Blodgett foreclose. His method was to visit a farmer whose mortgage was about to expire, timing his appearance with the noon meal. In the hospitable tradition of the countryside, the visitor was asked to break bread with the family. Then the banker would make a record of the payment of 50 cents on the debt and kept the mortgage alive.

When the Buffalo, Rochester & Pittsburgh, now the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, was built, the first surveys ran through Hermitage. Blodgett did not want a railroad in his village, fearing it would bring tramps to rob him. So he used his considerable influence to swing the tracks from Warsaw to Bliss via Hardy's instead of Hermitage. His home town never quite forgave him for depriving it of a place on the railroad.

A classic Blodgett yarn concerns the barrow ride he gave Will Strickland. The latter was standing on a street corner in Hermitage one day when Blodgett overheard him say: "I'd give a dollar if I were in Wethersfield Springs now." The banker said: "I'll take you there for half that amount, cash in advance."

Will handed over the half dollar. Blodgett went to his barn and returned with a wheelbarrow. Like everything else the Hermit used it was of heroic size in keeping with his great physical strength. Strickland got aboard. He was an accomplished harmonica player and chanced to have his mouth organ with him.

So as the Croesus of the countryside bent to the handles of the barrow, Will struck up a gay tune and the grotesque three-mile jaunt began — to musical accompaniment. The passenger reported later that Blodgett sat the barrow down but once and then to take off his coat. It was a steaming hot day. At Wethersfield Springs, the rich man wheeled smartly up to the porch of the hotel and said to his fare: "You're here. Get off."

\* \* \*

On the night of December 6, 1905, Blodgett stopped in the village store for a chat before going to his solitary home. Sometimes the recluse was garrulous. Again he would work

with other men for hours without uttering a word. That good night chat at the store was his last on earth.

Just after midnight villagers saw the Blodgett house wrapped in flames. A crowd gathered but could do nothing. The place was a raging furnace.

The next morning, while the ruins were still smoking, men began a hunt for the banker's body. One searcher picked up a \$20 gold piece. It was "hot money" in the literal sense. The search for the remains of James Blodgett was forgotten as men burned their hands, scooping up coins from a hidden hoard.

Then a nephew of Blodgett, Dr. Blackmer of Silver Springs, arrived on the scene. In tones of authority he reminded the gold hunters that they were taking property that did not belong to them and ordered them to return what they had found. Shamefacedly, most of them emptied their pockets into a water pail until it held more than a peck of money. Then the hunt for the recluse was resumed. The body was finally found, charred beyond recognition, in a corner of the cellar.

There was some gossip about foul play but an investigation determined that the fire had started from an overheated stove or a defective chimney.

The Blodgett fortune passed to a niece. The lonely man who had piled it up was laid to rest with scant ceremony in the village burying ground.

That was more than four decades ago. But still the stories are told about the Hermit of Hermitage, the Yale graduate who dressed like a tramp, the rural Midas who patched his own overalls—the strangest character ever to roam the Wyoming hills.

## *Uncle Grover Stole the Show*

THE TIME: High noon of June 10, 1891.

The Place: A Victorian house under tall trees, set well back from High Street in Walworth village.

The principal characters, by all the rules, should have been two bright-eyed young sisters, cool and lovely in their white silk gowns and each carrying a bouquet of June roses. For it was their wedding day and they were of "the upper crust" of the orchard country, members of a family long dominant in the social, political and business life of the community. The double wedding had drawn to the house on the hill 100 guests, among them the beauty and chivalry of the countryside. And of course, there were the two bridegrooms, both dashing young Westerners.

But strange to say, the center of attention was none of these. It was a fat and taciturn middle-aged man with a bull neck and a generous mustache. His ponderous frame was swathed in a tent-like frock coat. It was a blistering hot day and he sweated profusely. The saw-like edges of his wing collar clawed into his several chins. He was obviously an uncomfortable figure and hardly a prepossessing one. Yet he stole the show at one of the most brilliant social affairs of the region.

For the burly, perspiring wedding guest was Grover Cleveland, who already had served one term as president of the United States and who the next year was to stage a comeback unprecedented in American politics and wrest from Benjamin Harrison the office he had lost in 1888 to the bearded Hoosier. The two brides were his nieces, Nellie and Anna, the daughters



PHOTO BY FREDERICK W. BREHM

*Buffalo Bill in his Heyday as a Showman.*



*Susan B. Anthony at 36 (upper left) and Novelist Mary Jane Holmes. And Some Millinery Styles of the 1880s in the Victorian "Old Lace" Days.*

of his sister, Susan, who was the wife of the Hon. Lucien Theron Yeomans, of Walworth's First Family.

\* \* \*

The presence of a former president of the United States in a quiet, off-the-beaten path Wayne County village needs some explaining, so let's backtrack in history a bit.

To Walworth, which began life in 1801 as Douglas Corners, there came from Eastern New York in the 1830's one Theron Gilbert Yeomans, then 15 years old. Theron Yeomans became a wealthy and influential citizen, a sort of Walworth grandee. He operated a large nursery business, went into fruit growing on a large scale and brought a new variety of pear to Western New York from France. He had thoroughbred cattle and imported Holstein-Friesian stock from Holland. He once owned a cow that produced more butter in a single year than any bovine had ever produced before.

Theron Yeomans traveled extensively, in the United States and Europe. He was a power in politics and served in the Assembly. He was a delegate to the Republican National Convention of 1884 that nominated James G. Blaine for president. Blaine's successful Democratic opponent was Grover Cleveland. Yeomans was a staunch temperance man and built the Pacific Hotel, a temperance house, that still stands in the village and now houses the postoffice and the Grange hall. Since then Walworth has voted "dry" most of the time.

His son, Lucien, became associated with him in his many enterprises. He, too, was a state Assemblyman. The Yeomans built handsome residences. In their time they were mighty important people up that way. Albert, nephew of Theron, became sheriff of Wayne County.

In 1865 a smart and determined young woman named

Susan Cleveland came to Walworth as preceptress of the Academy. Previously she had taught in the East Bloomfield Academy. This daughter of an impecunious minister, one of 10 children, met the scion of the proud house of Yeomans. He proposed and, so the story goes, she told her suitor to listen for the school bell. If it rang at a certain hour, her answer was "yes." The school bell rang out at the appointed time and wedding bells soon followed. That was in 1867.

So Susan Cleveland, the erstwhile schoolmarm, became the wife of the village magnate. Meanwhile her brother, Grover, was fighting his way up in politics and the law in the roaring lake front city of Buffalo and becoming, by virtue of his stubborn, rugged honesty, in turn sheriff, mayor, governor and finally president of the United States. He was the man who said that "public office is a public trust."

Two daughters of the Lucien Yeomans, Nellie and her younger sister, Anna, went West. Nellie studied art in Toledo where she met her future husband, Charles Hamilton. Anna taught school in Beatrice, Nebraska, where she fell in love with Joseph A. Reed of that prairie town.

The sisters decided on a double wedding in the old home and set the day for June 10, 1891.

\* \* \*

So it came to pass that a former president of the United States clambered off a New York Central train at Palmyra Station that bright June morning. Grover Cleveland had been in Walworth before. But he had gone far since then, with a term in the White House and after his defeat by Harrison, lush years of corporation law practice in New York. He had gained in girth and conservatism. He had hobnobbed with the great.

But he still was a forthright, unpretentious individual with little gift for "small talk."

Cleveland had attended another wedding only 5 years before, his own, to the handsome young Frances Folsom in the White House. His bride did not accompany him to Walworth in 1891.

The livery rig of William Bump conveyed the former President to Walworth from the Palmyra station and back again. To shield his distinguished brother-in-law from the curious, Lucien Yeomans arranged a little deception. Fritz Seibert of Toledo, best man for Charles Hamilton, was about the same size as Cleveland and Yeomans took Fritz to and from the station in his buggy. Seibert enjoyed posing as Cleveland and bowed and doffed his hat to many people who thought they were gazing at the former President of the United States, as Lucien I. Yeomans, brother of the brides, and now head of a Chicago industrial engineering firm, recalls.

Two members of the Yeomans family who well remember that famous ceremony still live in Wayne County. They are Miss Clara Yeomans of Palmyra, a second cousin of the brides, and her niece, Mrs. Edith Yeomans Huntley, who lives south of Walworth, opposite the old homestead that the first Yeomans built in 1838.

Both were young at the time of the wedding but a few details still linger in their memories. Miss Yeomans recalls how the former President "sat in an open window to cool off and filled it to overflowing." She remembers the morning reception at which Cleveland shook hands all around but talked mostly with the men. Mrs. Huntley has never forgotten "the great stacks of dishes that had to be done" after the affair.

I doubt if the Yeomans at that time were overly impressed

by the presence of Grover Cleveland. They were pretty important people themselves, at least in their own bailiwick. Besides Cleveland was a Democrat and hardly a temperance man, although his sister, Susan, was an active member of the Women's Christian Temperance Union.

There's a clipping in Miss Yeomans' scrap book that tells of the double wedding at high noon in the Lucien Yeomans residence "under an arch of smilax, festooned with a horse shoe of white roses" . . . how the fair-haired Nellie entered on the arm of her frail and distinguished appearing father and brunet sister Anna followed, escorted by her uncle, the former President . . . of the officiating clergyman, the Rev. William N. Cleveland of Chaumont, an uncle of the brides . . . of the long list of guests, some of them from Rochester . . . of the "two elegant traveling clocks from Tiffany's in New York that were the gifts of Mr. and Mrs. Grover Cleveland and the two \$100 checks presented by the Hon. Theron G. Yeomans" . . . of the "sumptuous repast served by Caterer Ridley of Newark" . . . how the former President took the evening train for New York.

Between the lines of the faded clipping, one conjures up the picture of a burly man, "sweating it out" in stifling rooms, full of Republicans, and in a temperance household to boot. Cleveland was fond of his sister and her children but he was never at ease at social functions. He was a man's man. He liked the feel of a fierce tug of a fighting fish on his line; the thrill of his gunfire bringing down a high-flying wild duck, and, after the day's sport, a hard fought game of draw poker with his cronies.

\* \* \*

Many who were at that double wedding are no longer in the land of the living. One of the brides, Mrs. Hamilton, is

alive and resides in Boston. Her sister, Mrs. Reed, who was a member of New York University faculty after her marriage, died only last year. Lucien Yeomans passed away in 1906 and his widow died in Brooklyn in 1939 at the great age of 95.

Grover Cleveland now is only a name in the history books to all save a few oldsters and Walworth has forgotten the glory that descended upon it for one day. The old house, where the huge frame of a former President "filled an open window to overflowing" on a hot June day 57 years ago, still stands. It has passed out of the hands of the Yeomans clan and is now the residence of Mr. and Mrs. Conrad Schultz. Back of its white rail fence, the old house stands out in a brilliant new coat of red paint.

In fancy one sees again a massive frockcoated man lumbering down the sidewalk and climbing into Will Bump's livery buggy — and the springs sink under the great bulk . . . as Grover Cleveland departs for "somewhere east of Walworth, where there are deserving Democrats and a man can quench a thirst."

## *"Mr. Tutt" in the Genesee Valley*

**R**EMEMBER the "Mr. Tutt" stories by the late Arthur Train?

Their hero was an elongated old lawyer, a composite Uncle Sam and Abe Lincoln who wore Congress shoes and a stove pipe hat, who championed the underdog in court and confounded his rivals by citing some obscure point of law.

Many of the Tutt stories were placed in an upstate county seat village, full of quaint characters, that was called Pottsville. Train painted a word picture of "the smutty little wooden railroad station, the memorial library of funeral granite, the horse trough in the middle of Main Street, the beautiful old court house" in "The Hermit of Turkey Hollow" and other stories.

Did you know that the village of Geneseo, home of the Wadsworths and land of the fox hunt, is the prototype of the provincial Pottsville of the Mr. Tutt stories?

Through many of the pages strides the burly homespun figure of Sheriff Moses Higgins, whose enforcement of the law is diluted with a strong mixture of the milk of human kindness.

That sheriff was lifted from real life in the Genesee Valley, for Arthur Train modeled his fictional character after George H. Root, a former sheriff of Livingston County and today a popular business man in Avon.

How all this came about is quite a story — one that goes back to the Fall of 1914 and one of the most famous court trials in the history of the Genesee Valley.

\* \* \*

Train told much of the story in his book, "My Day in Court," a record of his own unique career. For he was not only a writer of international reputation but also a lawyer who in his younger days established a name as a skillful investigator and prosecutor.

In 1913 he was made a special prosecutor on the staff of Charles S. Whitman, then district attorney of New York County and destined soon to become governor of the state.

Train's first important assignment was the prosecution of Henry Siegel, New York merchant-banker, charged with grand larceny after the collapse of his manifold business enterprises including private banks in New York and Boston and stores in New York, Chicago and other cities.

A Lilliputian figure, a little over 5 feet in height and weighing only 115 pounds, Siegel was a German-born Jew who came to America at the age of 15 and fought his way up from a \$3 a week errand boy to the seats of the financial mighty. With his partner, Henry Vogel, he controlled at one time a dozen separate but affiliated enterprises. Depositors in his banks were principally Jewish sweatshop workers and his own not too well paid employes.

For years the Siegel enterprises had been actually insolvent but had been kept afloat by clever doctoring of the books and other devices to cover up the transfer of huge sums from the banks to the stores. The inevitable crash came in 1913 and the little man who had fancied himself a merchant prince and posed as a patron of the arts found himself fighting for his freedom, virtually alone. His partner Vogel had died.

Siegel retained as counsel one of the titans of the New York bar, John B. Stanchfield, onetime Democratic candidate for governor. He was a native of Elmira and in his youth had been

a star baseball player known throughout Western New York.

Dallas Newton, Rochester attorney, who was associated with Stanchfield in the Siegel defense, recalls a legal maneuver which at the time seemed very adroit.

Feeling against Siegel was running high in New York City, especially in the East Side tenement districts where lived so many of his depositors. Stanchfield figured his client would fare better if the trial were moved to some other county. So he moved for a change of venue—to his home county of Chemung. Whitman, knowing Stanchfield's popularity in the Elmira region, opposed such a move, just as his rival had foreseen. So the defense lawyer suggested Livingston County as a compromise. Whitman agreed and the trial was set for Geneseo in early November of 1914. Geneseo had been Stanchfield's objective all the time.

But as Train's book points out and the outcome of the trial showed, the New York barrister's strategy was not so sound.

In New York Train immediately began careful preparations for the trial. For months he had a firm of Scotch accountants, three legal assistants and a staff of detectives digging into every detail of Siegel's transactions, every corner of his past.

One Summer's day in 1914, a slightly built, keen eyed man dropped off a train at Geneseo's "smutty little wooden railroad station." Arthur Train had come to the Genesee Valley to "spy out the ground," as he put it.

Here the sheriff enters the picture. Train immediately struck up a friendship with broad shouldered, sandy-haired, jovial George H. Root, then in his forties. Train's book refers to him as "my firm friend, the sheriff, who later figures repeatedly in my stories."

The lawyer sensed that the selection of the right kind of

a jury was vital to the success of his case. A special panel of 100 had been prepared for possible duty in the Siegel trial. So, accompanied by the sheriff, who knew everybody from Fowlerville to Springwater by his first name, Train toured Livingston County from corner to corner getting acquainted with every talesman. Thus he was able to compile a card index of the prejudices, characteristics and idiosyncracies of every potential Siegel juror.

\* \* \*

As the day for the opening of the trial neared, excitement mounted in the county seat. Huge moving vans, laden with voluminous records seized in Siegel's offices, trundled up to the dignified old court house. Reporters, some of them the stars of the New York press, flocked into town. Hordes of depositors, most of them city-bred people with accents strange to the bucolic valley town, arrived and at once split into wrangling groups.

Train, in a letter to me five years ago, recalled "the fights between the depositor committees, often winding up with duckings in the horse trough." That circular concrete watering trough, with its fountain and bear statue, that stands, an object of some local pride, in the heart of Geneseo, seems to have impressed itself on the author's memory. For in his Pottsville stories, "the horse trough" continually bobs up.

When the trial opened on November 9, the village's few hotels were crammed to the eaves. Rooms in private homes were at a premium. There was a sound of revelry by night. Train's book tells how the "brilliantly lighted offices in the courthouse rattled to the sound of the ivories," testifying to the presence of the Fourth Estate. Dallas Newton also recalled with a chuckle that the visiting scribes and lawyers also "learned something about the Valley brand of poker."

The case of *The People against Henry Siegel* opened before a packed court room. Probably Arthur Train's memory went back to that court room scene when he wrote years later in his "Hermit of Turkey Hollow":

"It was the biggest event in the valley since Abe Lincoln showed himself on the back platform of his train when he came through on his way to Washington in 1861. Some of the old codgers who had seen him then — as little boys — were sitting in the court room."

The aristocracy of the valley, the hunting squires and their ladies, were there, along with the yeomanry, although it was the height of the fox hunting season.

The scene was surcharged with drama. There was the diminutive defendant whose feet barely touched the floor as he sat in the court room, a forlorn figure. There was Lawyer Stanchfield in cutaway, carefully creased trousers, a carnation in his button hole and exuding a rather pompous air of prosperity. Train wrote that despite Stanchfield's upstate origin and his youthful baseball exploits, "there was little about him in 1914 to appeal to a country jury. He looked like a metropolitan bridegroom."

He added that "when Siegel was finally brought to the bar for trial before 12 straw-chewing rustics from Geneseo, Livonia, Avon, Mount Morris, Nunda, Groveland, West Sparta and Conesus, I wore my oldest clothes."

Train exaggerated the rural makeup of the jury. There were, it is true, ten farmers in the box but there also were a well known and sophisticated Avon horseman who had a business in Rochester and a well-to-do Dansville nursery man who was no "straw-chewing rustic."

And Dallas Newton, in describing Train's personal appear-

ance spoke of him as "rather dapper." Even in his "oldest clothes," the prosecutor could not completely disguise his New York brand.

The case was a complicated one, a maze of financial statistics. Stanchfield's technique was to confuse the jury in this labyrinth of figures. Train sought to put the case into terms the dullest farmer could understand. In his opening address he compared Siegel's trickery to the deceit practiced by a man who obtains a horse through a false statement. For dollars he substituted bushels of wheat or tons of hay, talked always in terms the rural dweller could grasp.

Former employes of Siegel testified, some of them with obvious reluctance, of the devious methods of the tiny defendant whose face grew longer as the trial progressed. Stanchfield soon realized he was fighting a losing battle. Toward the end, the defense virtually ceased to contest the facts and concentrated on an attack on the law. It closed its case with startling abruptness after calling ten character witnesses to the stand.

\* \* \*

The Democrat and Chronicle described Train's summation as "one of the most dramatic presentations ever heard in the Livingston County Court House."

"Had Siegel been a man," thundered the prosecutor, turning to the defendant, "he would have gone into bankruptcy long ago. But instead with his dirty enterprises in mind, he allowed the middle class people, as Mr. Stanchfield has called them, to put money in the bank that he might flood it into his stores. Within eight days, there wasn't a penny of a shop girl too insignificant to be placed in his hands."

At 7:30 on the night of November 22, Supreme Court Justice William W. Clark gave the case to the jury, declaring

that he held serious doubts as to the validity of the grand larceny charge and virtually directing a verdict of guilty to a lesser count.

Everyone expected an early verdict. But as the hours passed and no word came from the jury room, the judge became impatient and directed Sheriff Root to inquire if there was likelihood of a settlement. The sheriff returned with the laconic report that "the jury has not yet reached a verdict." Judge Clark set 11:30 as a deadline by which the jury must either reach a verdict or be locked up for the night.

What followed is told by Train in virtually the same language, both in "My Day in Court" and "The Hermit of Turkey Hollow."

He recalled how the sheriff came to him and said: "Follow me." They made their way to the rear of the Court House and up a flight of back stairs to what was apparently an attic, directly over the jury room.

Let Train go on with the story:

"The attic was dusty, hot, close and full of cobwebs. Below all was silence, penetrated by an occasional hiss and punctuated now and then by a curse. What had occurred? Was there in fact a deadlock? After what seemed an incredible period of time, a chair scraped and a voice was heard:

"'What time is it now, Bill?'

"There was a momentary hiatus during which a watch was evidently consulted and then the foreman made reply: 'Eleven twenty.'

"Again the cloak of silence descended — at length I was startled by the voice of the foreman evidently just beneath.

"'Wal, boys,' he sighed in a voice of relief, 'I reckon we kin claim another day's pay. After all three dollars is real money — wuth gettin' . . . .'"

Train and the sheriff hastened to the court room in time to hear the jury, "another day's pay earned," report a verdict of guilty of a misdemeanor in that Siegel "obtained credit on false financial statements."

The little man was sentenced to serve 10 months in the Monroe County Penitentiary. The sentence was suspended for two months to give him a chance to make restitution to his creditors.

When he was unable to do this in the allotted time, the former millionaire became a resident of Rochester for eight months and ten days — in the old red brick penitentiary that has stood in South Avenue since the pre-Civil war reign of Franklin Pierce.

George Root recalled that "after the trial a number of Siegel's enemies tried to 'get' the little man. I warded them off and Siegel was heard to say that 'the sheriff was a pretty good fellow'."

After Siegel, who was a widower, had served his time, he married the woman who had been in charge of the telegraph office at Geneseo and who, Train said, "was the only person who had shown him any kindness during his miserable experience."

Siegel died within a few years, a heartbroken man who still believed that if the depositors had let him alone for a while, he could have started all over again and paid them all back.

\* \* \*

His experience in the Valley made such an impression on Arthur Train that when he came to write the celebrated Mr. Tutt stories, he chose Geneseo as the prototype of Pottsville and he perpetuated his pleasant memories of his friend, the sheriff, in the character of Moses Higgins.

Here is what Train wrote about Geneseo in "My Day in Court."

"The Geneseo(sic) Valley is, as is apt to be the case in localities where the population is stable, adheres to the land, marries within sight of its own chimneys, full of odd and picturesque characters.

"Here I encountered aristocratic ne'er-do-wells, tramps, gypsies, hermits, cranky old bachelors, misers, crooked politicians and all the usual prototypes of a New England village. Indeed the town of Geneseo itself, with its ramshackly buildings dating from the Civil War period and earlier, with its circular horse trough and nearby 'deepo' became the prototype of Pottsville, the scene of many of my Mr. Tutt stories. When the time came I merely transplanted it to the Mohawk Valley."

Local pride may impel some residents of "The Northern Bluegrass" to quarrel with Author Train's picture of their historic shire town.

They may find comfort in the letter which Arthur Train wrote me in his almost illegible scrawl:

"As to Geneseo, it is Pottsville only in size and New England flavor."

Arthur Train is dead but his Mr. Tutt stories will never die.

And next time you read about Pottsville, think of Geneseo up the green river valley.

And when your heart warms to the kindly deeds of the fictional Sheriff Moses Higgins, think of ex-Sheriff George Root of Avon and the famous Siegel trial of 1914.

## *Lost in a Salt Mine*

66 **H**AVE they got Floyd Collins out of that cave yet?" Remember those February days of 1925 when that question was on every lip as the nation watched the epic struggle for the life of an obscure youth, trapped in the narrow passageway of a Kentucky sand cave, with a seven-ton boulder on his foot?

Remember how after 17 tense days, the body of Floyd Collins was left in its tomb?

That story became an American saga. Songs and poems were written about it.

\* \* \*

Western New York has its own strange tale of an imprisonment in the depths of the earth. It was not a national sensation. It inspired no songs or poetry. In fact curiously little was ever printed about that saga of the Genesee Country.

Yet for many August days in the year of 1916, people up Retsof way were asking the one question:

"Have they found Benny Seduskie in that mine yet?"

Over the hills 30 miles southwest of Rochester is the largest rock salt mine in the world, that of the International Salt Company at Retsof. There for more than 60 years men have been blasting the salt out of the bed of a prehistoric lake.

There 1,000 feet down and under three villages, Retsof, Greigsville and Wadsworth, is a veritable city, 1,700 honey-combed acres of white-walled catacombs, of pillared chambers through which twist miles of "streets" and narrow gauge railway tracks. Once mules that never saw the light of day hauled the salt cars down those tracks. For many years electrically propelled locomotives have done the job.

Twilight was dappling the rolling hills of York Township on the 25th of August, 1916, when a rescue party brought out of that vast city in the bowels of the earth a young and obscure mine worker ALIVE.

For 12 days and 12 nights, 21-year-old Benny Seduskie had been lost in that labyrinth. He had wandered, without food or water, in the dank blackness, some of the time crawling on his hands and knees, hoping always to find the pathway to freedom, yet never finding it — until after nine tortured days he sank to the ground, waiting rescue or the end of time for him.

\* \* \*

Benny was a big, blond Russian, who had drifted in, from nobody knew where, to work in the Retsof mine less than a year before. He had no kin in the mining village — in fact, none in America — and no intimates. He was working as a helper on a drilling machine that fateful Saturday night of August 12, 1916.

The night shift's work was done and Benny was making his way to the foot of the shaft, for some reason behind the other workers. The carbide lamp on his cap went out. In a few minutes the power was switched off and the mine was plunged into darkness. That meant the other men had reached the top of the shaft in the elevator. No one had missed Benny.

He had no matches. He thought he could find his way to the shaft. When he was almost there, he made a wrong turn. He veered off to the right, following a line of railway tracks until he came to a locomotive. He sat there a while, trying to get his bearings. Then he continued his mistaken course eastward until he had wandered off into an abandoned part of the mine.

Benny had a package of tobacco in his pocket and he rationed it carefully, a few grains at a time, sucking in the moisture, until

it was gone. Then he became wild with thirst. The air was damp and clammy and it was so dark. In the distance he could hear the boom of the blasting, the rat-a-tat-tat of the drills, the drone of the locomotives. He tried desperately to direct his faltering steps toward the sounds. But he never could find the right road.

For nine days he wandered, sometimes in circles, in ever mounting physical and mental agony. He had some blasting wire in his jacket and he tied it about his waist, tightening it as the hunger pains increased.

He lost all track of time. Day and night were the same in his dungeon. At first he had shouted for help but he soon gave that up to conserve his strength. He slept when exhaustion overcame him.

When he became too weak to stand, he crawled on his hands and knees. They found those pitiful prints later. Finally he sank to the mine floor. When Benny Seduskie was found, he was only 60 feet from the main gangway, the pathway to freedom.

\* \* \*

When, after two days, Benny failed to show up at his boarding place or at the mine, the Livingston County sheriff was notified and a hunt was begun. At first nearby woods and a reservoir were searched, without result.

Then when no one could be found who had seen Benny since the night of August 12 and no workman remembered his coming out of the mine, searching parties began going down into "the city under the earth."

The hunters split into parties of three or four men and each group fanned out in different directions. The days went by, the search went on and still no trace of Benny.

One of those searchers was Fred S. Mosele, now of Rochester, then in charge of electrical work in the mine. From boyhood he had worked in the salt mines, first in Louisiana, then at Retsof. No one knew the mine layout better than he.

Mosele recalled the manhunt of 30 years ago in which he played a stellar role.

"I told Deputy Sheriff William Mann, in charge of the search, that I would like to explore the east side. I had a hunch Benny was in the abandoned part," he recalled. "That was on August 25 after the rest of the workings had been pretty well covered. After poking around on the east side for about an hour and a half, Mann, Constable William Simpson and I were waiting for the rest of the boys to come along when I heard a faint sound. It was a sort of moan, hollow like an echo.

"A minute later it came again and the others heard it, too. We made a dash for where the sound came from. I called out: 'Benny, Benny, where are you?' I heard a groan close by. I looked down and there was Benny trying to get to his knees. He was not able to stand and he was as black as a new polished stove. He was thin like a skeleton. We got him to the main shaft. A doctor was called and Benny was taken out — to see his first sunlight in 12 days. The first thing he asked for was a cigaret."

Benny was found only a few feet from a test shaft at least 40 feet deep. Mosele said it was almost a miracle he had not fallen into the pit.

Thomas N. Muchard, now district manager for the Prudential Insurance Company in Utica, has vivid remembrances of the episode. Benny was a boarder in the Muchard home in Retsof at the time and it was largely through the insistence of young Tommy Muchard that the mine was searched. He was

sure Benny had not come out with the others although at first his theory was scoffed at.

When Seduskie was first lost in the mine, he weighed nearly 180 pounds. When he was rescued, he had shrunk to about 90 pounds. He lost an average of 7½ pounds a day during his incarceration.

After his rescue, he was put on a hospital cot in the salt company's offices under a physician's care. He was to be fed a teaspoonful of whisky and a teaspoonful of milk every half-hour during the night. Toward morning the men on guard dozed off and Benny managed to get up and drink his fill of ice water from a pan. He was of tough fiber, that Russian, for he seemed to suffer no ill effects. The next day he was brought to the Rochester General Hospital where shortly he recovered — at least physically.

Nothing like this strange experience ever happened before or since at Retsof. Salt mining is not a particularly hazardous occupation and the Retsof plant's safety record over the years is excellent.

\* \* \*

It would be nice to wind up this tale with the report that the life that had been snatched from its underground prison was thereafter a worthy and a useful one. But that would not jibe with the facts in the case.

Benny was drafted into the Army in World War I and after his discharge, came back to the Retsof region — but not to the salt mines. He worked at odd jobs. People noticed a great change in him. The big youth who had been good-natured and quiet was now quarrelsome, erratic and addicted to drinking sprees.

Those who knew of his experience in the mine understood.

In the files of the Picket Line Post at Mt. Morris it is recorded that on the night of August 16, 1923—just seven years after he had been wandering, lost in the salt mine—Benjamin Seduskie, then residing in Nunda, rode, in a truck that he commandeered at gun point, to the Retsof home of Douglas Johns for whom he had worked. He started an argument with Johns about money. Clarence Mitchell, 24, a boarder in the Johns home, heard the rumpus and essayed the role of peacemaker—with the result that Benny shot him dead.

And in the archives of the old Courthouse at Geneseo, it is recorded that: "On November 19, 1923, Benjamin Seduskie was indicted for murder in the first degree and the same date was arraigned and pleaded not guilty. Thereafter on November 21, 1923, he pleaded guilty to murder in the second degree and was sentenced to Auburn State Prison for not less than 20 years nor more than life."

So the doors of a surface prison clanged shut behind Benny Seduskie, who once had been imprisoned for 12 days and 12 nights in the depths of the earth.

## *King of "Penmen"*

**I**F you will pardon the pun, Lon Whiteman's career was a CHECKered one.

This Western New Yorker became pre-eminent in his chosen field — and that field was forgery. In the early days of this century his cleverness and audacity made him an almost legendary figure.

A native of Dansville, he was the black sheep of a highly respectable and well-to-do family. He was graduated from two colleges with honors. He was a member of the Minnesota state legislature at the age of 25, was mayor of Duluth; chairman of the Democratic State Committee and as a delegate to a Democratic national convention, seconded the nomination of Grover Cleveland. He was one of the leading figures of the young Northwest in the 1880's, a bank president, and a newspaper owner. That was the early and most laudable phase of the strange career of Alonzo J. Whiteman.

Then he gambled away a fortune at poker and faro tables and in the Chicago Wheat Pit. Police of two continents came to know him as a slippery check artist, a specialist in the raising of drafts, the cleverest member of a band of swindlers that nearly wrecked many a small bank.

For 20 years the Pinkerton detectives dogged his trail. He was arrested 43 times, indicted 27 times and convicted 11 times with prison penalties totalling 51 years. Yet he actually served less than five years behind the bars.

The law finally caught up with him. Whiteman came out of Dannemora prison to find that science had checkmated him, too. For here in Rochester the Todd brothers had perfected a

device that stamped on every check and draft its exact amount. No longer could the skillful fingers of Lon Whiteman and his mob raise a draft from \$90 to \$3,900 as once they did.

Rochester saw him last in the twilight of his career — an aging, near sighted man peering at checks of an entirely different sort than those he handled in his heyday of crime. In 1919-20 Lon Whiteman was a cashier in a downtown Rochester restaurant. Previously he had been an inmate of the Livingston County Home. His last days are clouded in obscurity.

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The remarkable career of Alonzo J. Whiteman could be recorded only in the America of his day.

He was born in 1861 in the hill-sheltered village of Dansville of pioneer stock. His father was a prosperous lumberman, one of the leading men of the community and the family was an eminently respectable one. Lon had more advantages than the average country boy of his time. He was graduated from Hamilton College with honors — after he had acquired a reputation as one of the smartest poker players in the Mohawk Valley. He later took a law course at Columbia University. That legal training stood him in good stead in later years.

On inheriting a comfortable fortune from his father, he settled in Duluth and became one of the leading citizens of that growing Minnesota port city. Suave, genial, impeccably dressed, a free spender although he never drank nor used tobacco, he had a meteoric political career in the Northwest. Three times he was elected to the state legislature and served a term as mayor of Duluth. Twice he unsuccessfully ran for Congress.

Lon Whiteman was a churchgoer, too. He seemed an exemplary citizen and married into a good Minnesota family.

But he had one besetting sin — a mania for gambling. During his legislative days he was known as one of the most daring poker players in the state. He was proud of his ability to lose thousands on the turn of a card without the flicker of an eyelash. Legend has it that he once wagered and lost in a poker game one million feet of standing Minnesota pine.

He also gambled heavily in the Chicago Pit. After a few years he was broke and his family inheritance and all his possessions were gone with the winds of chance. His second defeat in a Minnesota Congress race wrecked his political hopes. So he left Minnesota and began the more colorful but hardly worthy phase of his career.

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Whiteman became known as a racetrack player and was barred from Eastern tracks for swindling. He joined hands with a resourceful and cunning lawyer, Robert Knox, in New York. They embarked in the draft raising business in a big way.

Lon's audacity was unbounded. In 1894 when 90 bookmakers were doing business at the Washington track in Chicago, Whiteman appeared among them with a leather sack slung over his shoulder and started to collect a \$300 "license fee" from each bookie. He collected from the first three but the fourth man was less gullible.

"Who in hell are you?" this man demanded.

"I'm the personal representative of Alonzo J. Whiteman. Good day," retorted the collector, as he vanished into the crowd with \$900 in his leather sack.

Sometimes the Whiteman gang manufactured its own drafts. Faded newspaper clippings tell that some of these blanks bore the name of The First National Bank of Lawrence, without naming the state. Whiteman and his merry men

worked them off in cities and villages named Lawrence all over the country.

Seldom did Lon pass any of the drafts in person. He always sought an alibi. Often he would return to Dansville to hide out. His aged mother was loyal to him throughout her lifetime. It is related that once Whiteman came to grief through his love of good food. Detectives, checking up on his mother's marketing, found she was buying delicacies not on her ordinary shopping list. They deduced that the epicurean son was around and were able to nab him. There were also stories about a secret staircase in the Whiteman homestead leading to a cupola where the "King of Penmen" would hide.

He was popular in his home town. It was difficult to dislike Lon Whiteman. Villagers just would not believe there could be anything shady about this well groomed slender chap of medium height and distinguished bearing, who was the soul of affability.

Whiteman many times established an alibi in this manner: On a day when his associates would be passing a draft in some other place, he would appear on the streets of Dansville and engage some of the leading citizens in conversation. Later these substantial people could testify that on that day they talked with Lon Whiteman in Dansville; therefore he could not possibly have been passing a raised draft in some distant town.

He dodged arrest all over the country. Always the Pinkertons clung to his heels. Whiteman claimed he was persecuted by them; that they sought to make him the scapegoat for all the forgeries in the country.

He operated in London and Paris and was arrested in both cities. Once a bundle of phony drafts found floating in the East River at New York led to his arrest. Again after he had

been convicted in California, and sentenced to 10 years, he somehow got Governor Flower of New York to intercede with the California governor and obtain his release.

Whiteman once "beat a rap" by telling the judge he had reformed and was going to conduct a revival campaign. He was a voluminous letter writer and always threatened to write a book — but never did. His legal knowledge enabled him to stall off prison terms through interminable appeals.

His most sensational escape was on September 29, 1904. He was arrested in St. Louis, charged with defrauding a Buffalo bank. Two detectives were bringing him back to Buffalo for arraignment on the Lake Shore Fast Mail.

According to their account, Whiteman dived headforemost from a stateroom window as the train was pulling out of Dunkirk. His guards pulled the bell rope and demanded that the train be stopped. The conductor refused, saying the train was carrying the mails on a fast schedule. He let the disgruntled policemen off at Silver Creek the next stop, and they returned to Dunkirk on a local, to find their quarry had disappeared.

Later Whiteman was caught near Dansville. While he was out on bail, he wrote a curious letter to The Democrat and Chronicle in which he complained that he was the victim of "Pinkerton persecution" and gave this version of his escape from the train:

"When I took French leave of the detectives at Dunkirk, not a wheel had commenced to turn. And I did not jump through the window. I just walked off the train when the detectives weren't looking. As soon as the train started, I walked into the Erie Hotel, registered as J. E. Hanson of Hornellsville, took a room and went to bed. The detectives came in two or three hours later and slept under the same roof.

I was called early in the morning before they got up and left for parts unknown."

When he was acquitted in Buffalo of one of the counts against him, press accounts relate that "Whiteman's friends greeted the verdict with a cheer." Later on he was convicted on another count and for the first time began a real prison stretch. Sent first to Auburn, he was transferred to Dannemora. He had been a teacher in the prison school at Auburn but officials discovered that some of his lectures on "finance" did not follow the curriculum.

On his release from prison, he found the art of check raising was doomed and drifted to Chicago and other mid-West cities, where he worked in restaurants and at odd jobs.

One November day in 1919, John Kenealy, who then operated a chain of restaurants in Rochester, received a letter from the Livingston County Almshouse at Geneseo. It was an application for a job and it was signed "Alonzo J. Whiteman."

Whiteman, it seems, had been run down and injured by an automobile in Columbus, Ohio. After being treated at a hospital there, the penniless ex-mayor of Duluth was sent to the almshouse in his native county where his family had borne a proud name.

Kenealy gave Lon a job as night cashier at a Main Street restaurant. It was a bitter cold day that Whiteman walked in, without an overcoat. But when a deep, authoritative voice announced that "I am Alonzo J. Whiteman," every head in the place turned. Even in the fadeout of his career, Lon Whiteman had lost none of his old aplomb.

His eyesight was failing and he seemed to have difficulty in making out the amounts on the patrons' checks. But in an interview he gave to a reporter, he boasted of his past triumphs

in politics and "business," told of the influential men he knew and declared he was going to write his autobiography.

Kenealy recalls how Whiteman once pored over a long article about his criminal career in a New York newspaper. Taking out his upper plate and using the denture to emphasize his points, much as the late FDR used to wave his long cigarette holder in a press conference, Alonzo said at one point, "That is a lie," at another "That is a ---- lie," and at a third; "That is a --- ---- lie!"

After a month or two, Whiteman left Rochester with a couple of New York friends. And Western New York saw him no more.

Nor did Restaurateur Kenealy ever see his new gray overcoat again.

## *Scholarly Bandit*

THE hands of the clock in the tall tower on the hill pointed to the hour of 2 a. m. It was the morning of February 14, 1913 and it was bitter cold.

The policeman on the beat stamped his feet and blew on his chilled fingers as he reached Rochester's windiest corner, Main and St. Paul Streets, and surveyed a seemingly deserted city.

Then a rattling and a banging broke the frosty silence and the cop's body grew tense. Diagonally across the street, from the service elevator exit of the Chamber of Commerce (now the Commerce) Building, he saw five overalled figures emerge, each trundling a can of ashes.

The policeman relaxed. "Just the city ash gang," he told himself as he resumed his dreary patrol.

He little knew that he had witnessed the apogee of one of the most audacious crimes in the annals of the city; that the "ash gang" was in reality one of the nation's cleverest burglary gangs, led by a man who later was to rate the title of America's "Master Crook," or that along with the ashes, the gang in overalls had removed from the Chamber of Commerce Building some \$3,000 worth of stolen jewelry.

And the haul would have been a quarter of a million had not a safe blower botched his job.

That was Rochester's introduction to the famous George "Dutch" Anderson, who in the later years of his remarkable career, was often to visit — without felonious design — this city on the Genesee, that in fact became a sort of "vacation" haven for him and his pals.

But few knew of his visits. The uninitiated would never recognize in the polished, mild-mannered, scholarly man who spoke five languages and collected rare books, the leader of the most resourceful criminal mob in America.

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In the Fall of 1912, a smooth spoken, well dressed man in his early thirties visited the wholesale jewelry establishment of Philip Present in the Chamber of Commerce Building. He represented himself as a dealer from the Middle West who wanted to look over the Present stock. He left without buying anything but he promised to return. During his visit, he pointed to a large safe and remarked to Present:

"You must have a lot of jewelry in there."

Innocently, the wholesale jeweler told his supposed customer:

"About a quarter of a million dollars worth."

Afterwards Philip Present recalled the glint that shone for a moment in the blue eyes of the stranger, whom next he was to meet in a court of justice.

"Dutch" Anderson kept his promise to return to the Present store. For months the vision of the safe that housed a fortune in jewels danced before his eyes.

One night early in February five men got off a train here. They had come from Toledo, then a notorious hideout of the criminal world. They spent several days getting the lay of the land. The master mind in all their strategy was the quiet, blond, tastefully dressed man who spent his spare time searching book stores and libraries for rare volumes.

They chose the early morning of the 14th to strike. The cold had driven even the hardiest "night hawks" off the street and the coast seemed clear when the five men made their way

to the Commerce Building. First they forced the padlock of the iron gate that barred the front entrance. Two of them surprised and overpowered the engineer in the basement, tied him up with a clothesline and stuffed a gag in his mouth. Two others seized the night watchman on his rounds and gave him the same treatment. The fifth acted as lookout.

Then they went to work on the largest of the five safes in the Present store, the one their leader had marked for his prey the fall before. But their plans went awry. Maybe the "peterman" had had a drop too much. Maybe his mixture of "soup" was faulty. At any rate a charge of nitroglycerine failed to shatter the inner door. It only moved it off its hinges.

Time was fleeting so the gang had to be satisfied with the contents of a salesman's sample trunk full of watch cases, diamonds and other jewelry, with a total value of some \$3,000.

Then came the grand getaway scene — the overalls, the ash cans, the basement elevator — that worked perfectly and according to plan. After the engineer had freed himself and gave the alarm, police were delayed in entering the building because the yeggs had substituted a padlock of their own for the one they had forced on the outside door.

But one of the mob had dropped a tell-tale souvenir. It was a locket, shaped like a lion's head and containing the picture of a comely girl in shirtwaist. Then a satchel turned up at the Central Station with other clues — clothing, a time-table, another picture of a girl, this one fondling a woolly dog; a cake of soap with the name of a Toledo hotel upon it.

"Dutch" Anderson in later years never bragged about the Present job, despite the success of "Operation Ashcans." His men had been clumsy in other ways. For within a few weeks the clues they had left behind brought the arrest of two members

of the band, Joseph Hill and Bert Donaldson. They were convicted and given prison terms. It was understood that the astute Rochester captain of detectives, William H. Whaley, had wrung up from them the identities of their three confederates.

In police archives is a circular dated May 22, 1913, signed by Chief of Police Joseph M. Quigley and captioned in large letters: "\$200 Reward."

The circular bore pictures and descriptions of the three men who were still wanted for the Present jewelry theft. One was Leo Mitchell alias Pope, "a safe blower." Another was James Cordano alias "Gold Tooth Jimmy." The third was given more prominence in the circular. Three pictures of a scholarly appearing, clean shaven man stretched across the page and under them was this description:

"George Anderson alias George Brown alias Edward Bauer alias Dutch alias The Swede; 32 years old, 5 feet 7 inches, 156 pounds, blue eyes, fair complexion, medium build."

"Dutch" Anderson used many an alias in his long criminal career. But never on any police circular did his real name appear. That was a secret he guarded all his life.

It was four years before the law caught up with Anderson and he was brought back here to face a court for his part in the Present job. He pleaded guilty and drew a five-year sentence to Auburn.

While "Dutch" was in that grim, gray prison over which Copper John mounts his ceaseless vigil, he met two men who were to play significant parts in his career.

One was a Rochester lawyer, the late William J. Baker. Anderson heard of this massive, affable barrister who was achieving a reputation as a brilliant "mouthpiece" for criminals. He sent for Bill Baker who thereafter was not only to be

"Dutch" Anderson's counsel but his trusted confidant and friend. Whenever the Master Crook was not being hunted, he made what he called "vacation trips" to Rochester to see Lawyer Baker.

And it was in Auburn that "Dutch" first met the flamboyant, trigger-happy Gerald Chapman whose name was thereafter to be linked with his as the high potentates of the shadowy realm of the underworld. The scholarly Anderson had been assigned to teach Spanish classes in the prison school. One of his pupils was the alert minded, younger Chapman. "Dutch" tutored "Chappy" in criminal science as well.

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After "Dutch" had served his stretch in Auburn, he visited Rochester and as was his custom called on Detective Captain John Patrick McDonald at Police Headquarters. He told "Captain Jack" that not only was he not pulling any jobs here but that henceforth he was "going straight."

A few weeks later the captain read that "Dutch" had been arrested with Chapman in the sensational \$2,000,000 holdup of a mail truck in New York City.

Bill Baker was associated with the defense in the ensuing trials that saw Anderson and Chapman sent to Atlanta. Both escaped — Chapman by shooting his way over the prison wall, Anderson by subtler means.

"Dutch," who included gardening among his many avocations, had charge of the prison rose garden. He slept in a tent nearby. The tools that won him freedom were hidden in the rose bushes he tended with such care.

After their escapes, Rochester did not see the much-hunted pair. The rest of their careers is familiar history. Chapman was captured, tried, convicted and doomed to die for the murder

of a policeman. Anderson, suspected of the slaying in Muncie, Indiana, in August 1925 of Ben Hance, a key witness against Chapman, and his wife, had to hide out in the Middle West.

On November 2, 1925, two days before Chapman heard his final plea to escape the death penalty denied by the Connecticut courts, a Muskegon detective named Hammond picked up a well-dressed stranger in the Saturday night shopping crowds of the small Michigan city. He suspected the man of passing a \$20 counterfeit bill.

As the detective was taking his prisoner through an alley to the police station, little dreaming whom he had in tow, Anderson, knowing his identity would soon be discovered, broke away and ran. There are two versions as to what followed.

The press dispatches of the time indicated that "Dutch" shot first, mortally wounding his captor and that the detective wrested the criminal's gun from his hand and with his dying breath sent the master crook to his death.

Big Bill Baker, who went to Muskegon to take charge of his client's body, maintained to the day of his death that Anderson never carried a gun, that the detective shot first and that while Hammond was bending over the fallen man, "Dutch" grabbed the officer's gun and dispatched him.

It was an ignominious end to a spectacular career — to die in an alley at the hands of a small town cop who did not even know the stature of the prisoner he had picked up on a minor charge. And the body of one who had been of the elite of the criminal world lay all night in the small town morgue before it was identified.

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If you were a shopper for rare books in the early 1920's,

you may have rubbed elbows with him in book stores or the old Reynolds Library in Spring Street.

Maybe you remember the impeccably dressed, impeccably mannered, blue-eyed, blondish, fortiesh man with the strong scholarly face who fondled rare calf-bound volumes as a virtuoso would caress a fine old violin.

Probably you put him down as an erudite professor seeking to add to his store of learning or perhaps a well-to-do businessman whose hobby was first editions.

Never in all this world did you guess that the gentlemanly book lover was a master crook, the leader of one of the most notorious criminal mobs of the time.

In police files all over the nation he was listed as George "Dutch" Anderson, specialist in safe blowing, forgery, confidence games, counterfeiting, daring holdups and jail breaks and all around defiance of the laws of the land.

But "Dutch" Anderson was not his real name. And the air of distinction and polish that clung to him was no acquired veneer. It was his by right of birth and breeding.

His real name was Ivan Dahl von Teller and he was born around 1881 in a mansion in Denmark hard by the pounding sea. His family was wealthy and in his boyhood he was given every cultural advantage.

He was a brilliant student and was sent to famed Heidelberg University in Germany. After his graduation — without a single saber scar — he returned to Denmark and the repressive influence of his somewhat tyrannical father. Then he became involved in some boyish scrape and there was a violent scene between the proud old man and the high spirited youth.

In was the beginning of Ivan Dahl von Teller's long revolt against constituted authority.

At the age of 20 he ran away to America, shed his aristocratic name and became "Dutch" Anderson, with a string of aliases, member of a band of New York crooks.

But he never shed the good manners and the love of literature that were instilled in him as a boy in Denmark.

Early in his career of crime, something happened that made him an embittered enemy of society all the rest of his days. Hunted down by bloodhounds in the South for a burglary he always swore he never committed, he was "railroaded" to imprisonment in a turpentine camp where he was frequently lashed and was chained to another convict while at work.

After that his road was clearly charted. He rose to the heights in his chosen "calling"; became the leader of a powerful gang; spent many months behind prison bars, many more a hunted fugitive with a price upon his head and he died ingloriously.

It was only after Anderson's death that his Rochester lawyer, Bill Baker, revealed what he knew of his client's early life. Although big Bill Baker had been "Dutch's" trusted friend, he caught only fragmentary glimpses of the criminal's background. "Dutch" Anderson was protecting a proud family name. His kinfolk were people of consequence in the home land. One relative was in the diplomatic service.

And above all, there was the little old lady in the mansion over the sea, the widowed Madame von Teller, who wrote regularly to "Ivan Dahl von Teller," the son that she thought was a successful and respected business man in America.

Baker saw to it that she was informed only that her son had died suddenly. He said at the time: "She does not read the American papers. She never knew her son's story. Please God, she never shall."

So far as known, she died without knowing it.

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"Dutch" Anderson's antecedents explain his scholarly traits, his courtly bearing and his genius for leadership.

He was a skillful etcher and engraver as well as a student and a linguist. He had executive ability. He planned his forays of crime like a general directing a military campaign or a Titan of Wall Street plotting a market coup.

In later years, Anderson was overshadowed by the more spectacular exploits of his pupil, Gerald Chapman, but those who knew insist that the quiet scholarly Dane was always the real brains of the gang.

It was a versatile gang he gathered about him. Each was a specialist in some line of law breaking. The mob's technique was to pull a bank job, then confuse the police by switching to forgery or wholesale passing of bogus money, with maybe a holdup sandwiched in.

The question arises: Why did a man of such ability and background choose such a career? There was the hatred he nourished in his heart against all authority. Add to that the thrill of the desperate gamble for high stakes, the pitting of his wits against the best minds of the law. To "Dutch" Anderson it all was a glorious game.

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About his Dr. Jekyll-Mr. Hyde personality hangs many a tale.

One had to do with his discovery in Spain — and he traveled far — that on one feast day of the year and only one in a remote monastery ancient vestments, richly encrusted with jewels were brought out for public display.

"Dutch" hatched a bold plan to raid the monastery on the feast day and steal the treasure.

So he brought his mobsters to Paris a fortnight before the appointed day and then left for Rome saying he would return in time for the raid on the monastery.

His mission in Rome was a strange one. He had picked up in Chicago an old volume of Latin which he translated. It contained a reference to an older, rarer book which Anderson yearned to translate. He found that volume extant only in the library of the Vatican.

So he went to Rome, talked his way into the Vatican library and plunged into his translating.

The feast day came, the jeweled vestments were put on display, the people came and marveled at their richness and at night they were put back, intact in the vaults of the monastery.

In the meantime, the American mobsters waited impatiently in Paris for the leader who did not come. "Dutch" Anderson was so engrossed in his Latin translation that he forgot all about the jewels, the plot to steal them and his waiting followers.

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Rochester's link with the Anderson-Chapman story comes about through their "vacation" visits here when they made Lawyer Baker's office their rendezvous.

The two robber chieftains had a common love for good literature although they were unlike in most ways. Anderson admired the works of Conrad and Oscar Wilde among the moderns. He could recite "The Ballad of Reading Gaol" by heart. Chapman fancied the verse of Amy Lowell.

Anderson eschewed gunplay and violence. The smoothly executed plan without use of either was his objective. Chapman,

the debonair French-Irishman, was trigger happy always carried a shooting iron and was a killer at heart.

Women played little part in "Dutch's" life. But it is remembered that when "Chappy" came to town, he drove a flashy open car and he generally had a woman with him, seldom the same one twice. Everything about Gerald Chapman was showy. Anderson was the acme of good taste.

During their visits here, the pair would down prohibition era firewater by the tumblerful but no one ever saw Anderson's mental or physical equilibrium shaken.

Anderson and Chapman liked to call themselves "Robin Hoods who stole from the rich and gave to the poor." That was arrant fantasy although both were generous and some humble and needy Rochesterians were recipients of their largess.

Anderson seems the more intriguing, the stronger character of the two. Chapman was just another gangster-killer with more imagination and more cultivated tastes than most.

Not that "Dutch" Anderson was any paragon. He was a wicked man who did much evil in this world. But compared with some of the headlined criminals who came after him, such as the Capones and the Dillingers, the scholarly Dane was a shining white knight.

It seems such a pity that he did not devote his talent for leadership to lawful enterprise; his artistic gifts to creative purposes. He might have attained a high place in the society he wasted his life fighting.

But he chose the path he trod all his adult life.

And in the end the well-born Ivan Dahl von Teller, the Heidelberg graduate who spoke five languages, died in an alley in the foggy Michigan night — shot down like a hunted dog.

## *Mystery in the Hills*

THIS is a murder mystery tale from real life. The characters are not wealthy or glamorous or sophisticated or famous. They are plain country folk. The setting is not a baronial castle or an exotic isle. It is an off-the-beaten-track hamlet in the Genesee County hills.

Over twenty-five years have gone by since the spotlight swung on little Linden, a bit of old New England, transplanted to the Western New York countryside. Her settlers were New Englanders and their descendants still live on the acres their fathers plowed. A new generation lives in the village now and the terror that possessed it a quarter century ago is only a memory in gray heads. But it was the scene of Western New York's most baffling murder mystery — a mystery unsolved to this day.

Many of the man hunters who slogged over the roads, hub deep in mud, that March of 1923, are no more. There are veteran reporters who remember wild dashes in taxicabs from Batavia, the county seat, over 14 miles of rough roads, in the pursuit of a new "clue," another clue that fell through.

Twice within 17 months a maniacal killer struck in the hill settlement of less than 100 souls and four persons, all of them middle aged, without a known enemy in the world, met death from his brutal, seemingly senseless attacks.

To begin with, we must go back to late October of 1922, the time of harvest, when the apple orchards were red with ripened fruit along the road from Bethany to Linden — villages whose very names whisper of their Yankee origin.

On that country road, one and one-half miles from Linden,

Frances Leora Kimball, 72-year-old spinster, lived in an old-fashioned frame farm house where her father before her had lived and died. It was a snug little farm of 60 acres where Franc Kimball lived with her brother, Willie, a bachelor.

On Monday, October 22 at 10 a. m., Willie left for his work in a fruit warehouse. There he spent the night as was his custom in the busy harvest season.

Franc Kimball was a spare, hard working woman. Her tongue might have been a bit sharp at times but she minded her own business, had a limited circle of friends and lived at peace in her farm homestead with all the world. She was a woman of fixed routine. Promptly at 6 o'clock each night she milked her cow.

Mid afternoon of Tuesday, October 23, the keen eye of a farmer neighbor noticed that the Kimball cow had not been milked. He saw no signs of life about the place and becoming alarmed, called the State Police. The gray riders found the front door bolted. They battered it down.

Accompanied by neighbors, they began to look around the house.

Then the search reached the cellar. There a neighbor saw a foot protruding from under a potato bin.

The body of Franc Kimball had been jammed under a shelf and partly covered with an old door. Her head had been battered — with a stone the manhunters later found.

There were few signs of a struggle. Her clothing was little disarranged. A fruit jar had been tipped over on a shelf. A pan of eggs, which the farm woman had evidently just gathered before she was struck down, was found nearby, with a few blood spots on them. There were blood stains on a piece of lumber too. The house was not ransacked. There was no sign

of robbery. And there were no clues to the killer.

The police theorized that the slayer entered by way of an outside cellar hatchway, first knocked Miss Kimball unconscious with his fist, then finished her off with the rock. Then as the investigators reconstructed the crime, the killer bolted the door between the cellar and the ground floor, walked out the front door, locking it and either taking the key with him or tossing it away. It never was found.

But he did a strange and seemingly needless thing. A telephone wire, just outside a cellar window, had been cut, obviously with a jack knife. A few weeks before there had been an attempt to burglarize the village store at Linden and a wire had been cut there in same fashion.

Footprints of a large man were found in the Kimball yard, although they might have belonged to any one of the scores of curious neighbors who swarmed over the place.

A motorist came forward with a story of seeing an aged but burly and roughly clad man walking near the Kimball home on the afternoon before the body was found. The man had been slashing viciously at the grass along the roadside with a stick as he stalked along.

There followed a roundup of all the tramps and hermits that the man hunters could lay their hands on in Western New York. Scores were brought in and questioned, all to no avail.

Franc Kimball went to her grave, with her slayer still at large. Excitement mounted throughout the countryside. Who would murder a defenseless old lady for no apparent motive?

Doggedly the troopers and the Genesee County authorities followed every lead. At the end of a month they had to give up.

But there had been a witness to the crime. When neighbor women came to the Kimball home after the discovery of the

tragedy, Mugs, the spinster's pet cat and inseparable companion, meowed in piteous fashion and shrank away under a sofa. If only Mugs could talk!

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It was March, that madcap month that badgers and taunts Western New Yorkers just before the coming of the spring. Nearly 17 months had gone by since Franc Kimball's murder. The country folk were beginning to breathe easier again and the excited buzzing of little groups had almost died away.

Then the killer struck again.

At 6 o'clock each evening, 50-year-old Mabel Howard Morse, who kept the village store while her husband, George Morse, a traveling man, was on the road, went down the street a few doors to a neighbor's home for milk.

That neighbor's name was Thomas Whaley. He was 55, a section hand on the Erie Railroad whose trains rumbled past, only a stone's throw from his home where he lived with his wife, aged 55. They were quiet, hard working respectable people with no surplus of the world's goods. Neither the Whaleys nor Mrs. Morse had any known enemies.

When after an hour Mrs. Morse failed to return to the store, three men waiting there, knowing her routine, became worried. They went to the Whaley home and found the doors all locked. One of them raised a kitchen window. From it emerged a wisp of smoke.

They broke down a rear door. In a first floor bedroom they found three bodies piled in what had been intended as a funeral pyre. An oil-soaked rug had been thrown over them, oil had been thrown on the carpets and on the bed but only a smouldering fire had resulted.

The Whaleys had been shot to death and Mrs. Morse killed

with a pick axe handle. There were blood stains on the kitchen floor, two bullet marks in the kitchen woodwork, three 32-caliber revolver shells on the floor but no sign of a gun.

An overturned chair and a pitcher of milk on the kitchen table, set for the evening meal, indicated that the Whaleys were killed in the kitchen and then dragged into the bedroom.

The key of the front door was missing and the rear door bolted. The Whaleys had no telephone wire to cut. The hand of the Kimball slayer was written all over this triple murder.

As the crime was first reconstructed (there were many reconstructions before the man hunters cried quits), it was deduced that the slayer entered the Whaley home through an old fashioned, outside cellar hatchway, shot Mrs. Whaley first. Her husband, doing his chores in the barn, heard the shot, picked up the pick axe handle and came charging in. Tom Whaley was not lacking in physical courage and he had the reputation of being a man of spirit. The slayer fired one wild shot as Whaley circled the kitchen, another as he dodged into the pantry and then sent a bullet through the section hand's neck.

Then Mrs. Morse came in with her milk pail, saw the gory spectacle and was struck down with the pick handle. Was she an unintended victim or did the killer, knowing her custom of going after the milk, wait for her in the darkened home? At any rate, he at some time or other pulled down the shades, covered one window with a blanket and started the fire which he hoped would obscure his crime.

Then he bolted the outside cellar door, went up stairs, locked the back door of the house, went out the front door, locking it and taking the key with him. It was the Kimball mystery all over again.

Whaley's empty pocketbook and two empty purses belonging

to his wife were found. Two watches were missing. The obvious motive was robbery. But the more astute among the investigators did not believe that the slayer would risk his neck for the prospect of such small booty. And in the end the man-hunters were virtually unanimous in the belief that their quarry was a resident of the village, a cunning maniac, probably with sadistic tendencies.

But finding that man, even in a village of 100 souls, was another matter.

As in the Kimball case there was a sweeping roundup of tramps and suspicious characters. One of them, a paroled insane convict, confessed the crime one day, repudiated it the next and was found to have been 25 miles away at the time of the murder. Eventually all the strays picked up were freed.

The terror-stricken townspeople were questioned but none threw any light on the mystery. It was strange that in little Linden where everybody's movements are common property, that no one had been seen entering the Whaley home. Stranger still was the fact that no one had heard the shots although the spot was no means isolated. A half hour after the tragedy, a resident, unnerved by the affair, began shooting at cats near his home and the whole village heard those shots.

The investigators came upon many things that were strange about Linden, the little hill village that had overnight become an armed camp.

The villagers for the first time in their lives bolted their doors. Rusty firearms were dragged out from attics and old chests and placed within easy reach. Clairvoyants were consulted. One woman fainted when a neighbor on a casual errand rapped at her door. Village women talked of taking target practice. There were rumblings in the hills that the white

robed Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, then in their heydey in these parts, might take a hand in the matter. They didn't.

But there was fear in every heart. For who knew when and where the killer in their midst might strike again?

State Troopers, their gray uniforms spattered with mire, rode on horseback over the countryside. Cars of investigators became mired in the hub-deep mud of the roads. A veritable army of investigators, reporters and sensation hunters descended on the once quiet village. There was no hotel and few accommodations at Linden so Batavia, the county seat, 14 miles away, became headquarters of the greatest man hunt in the area's history.

After two months filled with wild rumors and hectic dashes hither and yon on fruitless clues, the man hunt had to end.

Gradually peace returned to Linden.

But the maniac who slew four innocent people is still at large — unless he has joined his victims in the Great Beyond.

